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UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.

*BY THE SAME AUTHORESS.*

A Daughter of Fife.
The Bow of Orange Ribbon.
Between Two Loves.
She Loved a Sailor.

# WOVEN OF LOVE AND GLORY.

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# WOVEN OF LOVE AND GLORY.

BY

AMELIA E. BARR,

*Author of "The Bow of Orange Ribbon," "Between Two Loves," &c., &c.*

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# WOVEN OF LOVE AND GLORY.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE CITY IN THE WILDERNESS.

"What, are you stepping westward?" "Yea."
* * * * *
Yet who would stop or fear to advance,
Though home or shelter there was none,
With such a sky to lead him on!"
—WORDSWORTH.

"Ah! cool night wind, tremulous stars,
Ah! glimmering water,
Fitful earth murmur,
Dreaming woods!" —ARNOLD.

IN A. D. sixteen hundred and ninety-two, a few Franciscan monks began to build a city. The site chosen was a lovely wilderness hundreds of miles away from civilization on every side, and surrounded by savage and warlike tribes. But the spot was as beautiful as the garden of God. It was shielded by picturesque mountains, watered by two rivers, carpeted with flowers innumerable,

shaded by noble trees, joyful with the notes of a multitude of singing birds. To breathe the balmy atmosphere was to be conscious of some rarer and finer life, and the beauty of the sunny skies—marvellous at dawn and eve with tints of saffron and amethyst and opal—was like a dream of heaven.

One of the rivers was fed by a hundred springs situated in the midst of charming bowers. The monks called it the San Antonio; and on its banks they built three noble Missions. The shining white stone of the neighborhood rose in graceful domes and spires above the green trees. Sculptures, basso-relievos, and lines of gorgeous coloring adorned the exteriors. Within, were splendid altars and the appealing charms of incense, fine vestures and fine music; while from the belfreys, bells sweet and resonant called to the savages, who paused spell-bound and half-afraid to listen.

Certainly these priests had to fight as well as to pray. The Indians did not suffer them to take possession of their Eden without passionate and practical protest. But what the monks had taken, they kept; and the fort and the

soldier followed the priest and the Cross. Ere long, the beautiful Mission became a beautiful city, about which a sort of fame full of romance and mystery gathered. Throughout the south and west, up the great highway of the Mississippi, on the busy streets of New York, and among the silent hills of New England, men spoke of San Antonio, as in the seventeenth century they spoke of Peru; as in the eighteenth century they spoke of Delhi, and Agra, and the Great Mogul.

Sanguine French traders carried thither rich ventures in fancy wares from New Orleans; and Spanish dons from the wealthy cities of Central Mexico, and from the splendid homes of Chihuahua, came there to buy. And from the villages of Connecticut, and the woods of Tennessee, and the lagoons of Mississippi, adventurous Americans entered the Texan territory at Nacogdoches. They went through the land, buying horses and lending their ready rifles and stout hearts to every effort of that constantly increasing body of Texans, who, even in their swaddling bands, had begun to cry Freedom!

At length this cry became a clamor that

shook even the old viceroyal palace in Mexico; while in San Antonio it gave a certain pitch to all conversation, and made men wear their cloaks, and set their beavers, and display their arms, with that demonstrative air of independence they called *los Americano.* For, though the Americans were numerically few, they were like the pinch of salt in a pottage—they gave the snap and savor to the whole community.

Over this Franciscan-Moorish city the sun set with an incomparable glory one evening in May, eighteen thirty-five. The white, flat-roofed, terraced houses — each one in its flowery court—and the domes and spires of the Missions, with their gilded crosses, had a mirage-like beauty in the rare, soft atmosphere, as if a dream of Old Spain had been materialized in a wilderness of the New World.

But human life in all its essentials was in San Antonio, as it was and has been in all other cities since the world began. Women were in their homes, dressing and cooking, nursing their children and dreaming of their lovers. Men were in the market-places, buying and selling, talking of politics and anticipating war. And yet in spite of these fixed

attributes, San Antonio was a city penetrated with romantic elements, and constantly picturesque.

On this evening, as the hour of the Angelus approached, the narrow streets and the great squares were crowded with a humanity that assaulted and captured the senses at once; so vivid and so various were its component parts. A tall sinewy American with a rifle across his shoulder was paying some money to a Mexican in blue velvet and red silk, whose breast was covered with little silver images of his favorite saints. A party of Mexican officers were strolling to the Alamo; some in white linen and scarlet sashes, others glittering with color and golden ornaments. Side by side with these were monks of various orders: the Franciscan in his blue gown and large white hat; the Capuchin in his brown serge; the Brother of Mercy in his white flowing robes. Add to these diversities, Indian peons in ancient sandals, women dressed as in the days of Cortez and Pizarro, Mexican vendors of every kind, Jewish traders, negro servants, rancheros curvetting on their horses, Apache and Comanche braves on spying expeditions;

and, in this various crowd, yet by no means of it, small groups of Americans; watchful, silent, armed to the teeth: and the mind may catch a glimpse of what the streets of San Antonio were in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and thirty-five.

It was just before sunset that the city was always at its gayest point. Yet, at the first toll of the Angelus, a silence like that of enchantment fell upon it. As a mother cries hush to a noisy child, so the angel of the city seemed in this evening bell to bespeak a minute for holy thought. It was only a minute, for with the last note there was even an access of tumult. The doors and windows of the better houses were thrown open, ladies began to appear on the balconies, there was a sound of laughter and merry greetings, and the tiny cloud of the cigarette in every direction.

But amid this sunset glamour of splendid color, of velvet, and silk, and gold embroidery, the man who would have certainly first attracted a stranger's eye wore the plain and ugly costume common at that day to all American gentlemen. Only black cloth and white linen

and a low palmetto hat with a black ribbon around it; but he wore his simple garments with the air of a man having authority, and he returned the continual salutations of rich and poor, like one who had been long familiar with public appreciation.

It was Dr. Robert Worth, a physician whose fame had penetrated to the utmost boundaries of the territories of New Spain. He had been twenty-seven years in San Antonio. He was a familiar friend in every home. In sickness and in death he had come close to the hearts in them. Protected at first by the powerful Urrea family, he had found it easy to retain his nationality, and yet live down envy and suspicion. The rich had shown him their gratitude with gold; the poor he had never sent unrelieved away, and they had given him their love.

When in the second year of his residence he married Dona Maria Flores, he gave, even to doubtful officials, security for his political intentions. And his future conduct had seemed to warrant their fullest confidence. In those never ceasing American invasions between eighteen hundred and three and

eighteen hundred and thirty-two, he had been the friend and succourer of his countrymen, but never their confederate; their adviser, but never their confidant.

He was a tall, muscular man of a distinguished appearance. His hair was white. His face was handsome and good to see. He was laconic in speech, but his eyes were closely observant of all within their range, and they asked searching questions. He had a reverent soul, wisely tolerant as to creeds, and he loved his country with a passion which absence from it constantly intensified. He was believed to be a thoroughly practical man, fond of accumulating land and gold; but his daughter Antonia knew that he had in reality a noble imagination. When he spoke to her of the woods, she felt the echoes of the forest ring through the room; when of the sea, its walls melted away in an horizon of long rolling waves.

He was thinking of Antonia as he walked slowly to his home in the suburbs of the city. Of all his children she was the nearest to him. She had his mother's beauty. She had also his mother's upright rectitude of

nature. The Iberian strain had passed her absolutely by. She was a northern rose in a tropical garden. As he drew near to his own gates, he involuntarily quickened his steps. He knew that Antonia would be waiting. He could see among the thick flowering shrubs her tall, slim figure clothed in white. As she came swiftly down the dim aisles to meet him, he felt a sentiment of worship for her. She concentrated in herself his memory of home, mother, and country. She embodied, in the perfectness of their mental companionship, that rarest and sweetest of ties—a beloved child, who is also a wise friend and a sympathetic comrade. As he entered the garden she slipped her hand into his. He clasped it tightly. His smile answered her smile. There was no need for any words of salutation.

The full moon had risen. The white house stood clearly out in its radiance. The lattices were wide open and the parlor lighted. They walked slowly towards it, between hedges of white camelias and scarlet japonicas. Vanilla, patchuli, verbena, wild wandering honeysuckle —a hundred other scents—perfumed the light, warm air. As they came near the house there

was a sound of music, soft and tinkling, with a rhythmic accent as pulsating as a beating heart.

"It is Don Luis, father."

"Ah! He plays well—and he looks well."

They had advanced to where Don Luis was distinctly visible. He was within the room, but leaning against the open door, playing upon a mandolin. Robert Worth smiled as he offered his hand to him. It was impossible not to smile at a youth so handsome, and so charming—a youth who had all the romance of the past in his name, his home, his picturesque costume; and all the enchantments of hope and great enthusiasms in his future.

"Luis, I am glad to see you; and I felt your music as soon as I heard it."

He was glancing inquiringly around the room as he spoke; and Antonia answered the look:

"Mother and Isabel are supping with Dona Valdez. There is to be a dance. I am waiting for you, father. You must put on your velvet vest."

"And you, Luis?"

"I do not go. I asked the judge for the appointment. He refused me. Very well! I

care not to drink chocolate and dance in his house. One hand washes the other, and one cousin should help another."

"Why did he refuse you?"

"Who can tell?" but Luis shrugged his shoulders expressively, and added, "He gave the office to Blas-Sangre."

"Ah!"

"Yes, it is so—naturally;—Blas-Sangre is rich, and when the devil of money condescends to appear, every little devil rises up to do him homage."

"Let it pass, Luis. Suppose you sing me that last verse again. It had a taking charm. The music was like a boat rocking on the water."

"So it ought to be. I learned the words in New Orleans. The music came from the heart of my mandolin. Listen, Señor!

"'Row young oarsman, row, young oarsman,
Into the crypt of the night we float:
Fair, faint moonbeams wash and wander,
Wash and wander about the boat.
Not a fetter is here to bind us,
Love and memory lose their spell;
Friends that we have left behind us,
Prisoners of content,—farewell!'"

"You are a wizard, Luis, and I have had a

sail with you. Now, come with us, and show those dandy soldiers from the Alamo how to dance."

"Pardon! I have not yet ceased to cross myself at the affront of this morning. And the Señora Valdez is in the same mind as her husband. I should be received by her like a dog at mass. I am going to-morrow to the American colony on the Colorado."

"Be careful, Luis. These Austin colonists are giving great trouble—there have been whispers of very strong measures. I speak as a friend."

"My heart to yours! But let me tell you this about the Americans—their drum is in the hands of one who knows how to beat it."

"As a matter of hearsay, are you aware that three detachments of troops are on their way from Mexico?"

"For Texas?"

"For Texas."

"What are three detachments? Can a few thousand men put Texas under lock and key? I assure you not, Señor; but now I must say adieu!"

He took the doctor's hand, and, as he held

it, turned his luminous face and splendid eyes upon Antonia. A sympathetic smile brightened her own face like a flame. Then he went silently away, and Antonia watched him disappear among the shrubbery.

"Come, Antonia! I am ready. We mus not keep the Señora waiting too long."

"I am ready also, father." Her voice was almost sad, and yet it had a tone of annoyance in it—"Don Luis is so imprudent," she said. "He is always in trouble. He is full of enthusiasms; he is as impossible as his favorite, Don Quixote."

"And I thank God, Antonia, that I can yet feel with him. Woe to the centuries without Quixotes! Nothing will remain to them but—Sancho Panzas."

## CHAPTER II.

### ANTONIA AND ISABEL.

"He various changes of the world had known,
And some vicissitudes of human fate,
Still altering, never in a steady state:
Good after ill, and after pain delight,
Alternate, like the scenes of day and night."

"Ladies whose bright eyes
Rain influence."

"But who the limits of that power shall trace,
Which a brave people into life can bring,
Or hide at will, for freedom combating
By just revenge inflamed?"

FOR many years there had never been any doubt in the mind of Robert Worth as to the ultimate destiny of Texas, though he was by no means an adventurer, and had come into the beautiful land by a sequence of natural and business-like events. He was born in New York. In that city he studied his profession, and in eighteen hundred and three began its practice in an office near Contoit's Hotel, opposite the City Park. One day he

was summoned there to attend a sick man. His patient proved to be Don Jaime Urrea, and the rich Mexican grandee conceived a warm friendship for the young physician.

At that very time, France had just ceded to the United States the territory of Louisiana, and its western boundary was a subject about which Americans were then angrily disputing. They asserted that it was the Rio Grande; but Spain, who naturally did not want Americans so near her own territory, denied the claim, and made the Sabine River the dividing line. And as Spain had been the original possessor of Louisiana, she considered herself authority on the subject.

The question was on every tongue, and it was but natural that it should be discussed by Urrea and his physician. In fact, they talked continually of the disputed boundary, and of Mexico. And Mexico was then a name to conjure by. She was as yet a part of Spain, and a sharer in all her ancient glories. She was a land of romance, and her very name tasted on the lips, of gold, and of silver, and of precious stones. Urrea easily persuaded the young man to return to Mexico with him.

The following year there was a suspicious number of American visitors and traders in San Antonio, and one of the Urreas was sent with a considerable number of troops to garrison the city. For Spain was well aware that, however statesmen might settle the question, the young and adventurous of the American people considered Texas United States territory, and would be well inclined to take possession of it by force of arms, if an opportunity offered.

Robert Worth accompanied General Urrea to San Antonio, and the visit was decisive as to his future life. The country enchanted him. He was smitten with love for it, as men are smitten with a beautiful face. And the white Moorish city had one special charm for him—it was seldom quite free from Americans, Among the mediæval loungers in the narrow streets, it filled his heart with joy to see at intervals two or three big men in buckskin or homespun. And he did not much wonder that the Morisco-Hispano-Mexican feared these Anglo-Americans, and suspected them of an intention to add Texan to their names.

His inclination to remain in San Antonio

was settled by his marriage. Dona Maria Flores, though connected with the great Mexican families of Yturbide and Landesa, owned much property in San Antonio. She had been born within its limits, and educated in its convent, and a visit to Mexico and New Orleans had only strengthened her attachment to her own city. She was a very pretty woman, with an affectionate nature, but she was not intellectual. Even in the convent the sisters had not considered her clever.

But men often live very happily with commonplace wives, and Robert Worth had never regretted that his Maria did not play on the piano, and paint on velvet, and work fine embroideries for the altars. They had passed nearly twenty-six years together in more than ordinary content and prosperity. Yet no life is without cares and contentions, and Robert Worth had had to face circumstances several times, which had brought the real man to the front.

The education of his children had been such a crisis. He had two sons and two daughters, and for them he anticipated a wider and grander career than he had chosen for himself.

When his eldest child, Thomas, had reached the age of fourteen, he determined to send him to New York. He spoke to Dona Maria of this intention. He described Columbia to her with all the affectionate pride of a student for his alma mater. The boy's grandmother also still lived in the home wherein he himself had grown to manhood. His eyes filled with tears when he remembered the red brick house in Canal Street, with its white door and dormer windows, and its one cherry tree in the strip of garden behind.

But Dona Maria's national and religious principles, or rather prejudices, were very strong. She regarded the college of San Juan de Lateran in Mexico as the fountain-head of knowledge. Her confessor had told her so. All the Yturbides and Landesas had graduated at San Juan.

But the resolute father would have none of San Juan. "I know all about it, Maria," he said. "They will teach Thomas Latin very thoroughly. They will make him proficient in theology and metaphysics. They will let him dabble in algebra and Spanish literature; and with great pomp, they will give him his degree,

and 'the power of interpreting Aristotle all over the world.' What kind of an education is that, for a man who may have to fight the battles of life in this century?"

And since the father carried his point it is immaterial what precise methods he used. Men are not fools even in a contest with women. They usually get their own way, if they take the trouble to go wisely and kindly about it. Two years afterwards, Antonia followed her brother to New York, and this time, the mother made less opposition. Perhaps she divined that opposition would have been still more useless than in the case of the boy. For Robert Worth had one invincible determination; it was, that this beautiful child, who so much resembled a mother whom he idolized, should be, during the most susceptible years of her life, under that mother's influence.

And he was well repaid for the self-denial her absence entailed, when Antonia came back to him, alert, self-reliant, industrious, an intelligent and responsive companion, a neat and capable housekeeper, who insensibly gave to his home that American air it lacked, and who set upon his table the well-cooked meats and

delicate dishes which he had often longed for.

John, the youngest boy, was still in New York finishing his course of study; but regarding Isabel, there seemed to be a tacit relinquishment of the purpose, so inflexibly carried out with her brothers and sister. Isabel was entirely different from them. Her father had watched her carefully, and come to the conviction that it would be impossible to make her nature take the American mintage. She was as distinctly Iberian as Antonia was Anglo-American.

In her brothers the admixture of races had been only as alloy to metal. Thomas Worth was but a darker copy of his father. John had the romance and sensitive honor of old Spain, mingled with the love of liberty, and the practical temper, of those Worths who had defied both Charles the First and George the Third. But Isabel had no soul-kinship with her father's people. Robert Worth had seen in the Yturbide residencia in Mexico the family portraits which they had brought with them from Castile. Isabel was the Yturbide of her day. She had all their physical traits, and from her

large golden-black eyes the same passionate soul looked forth. He felt that it would be utter cruelty to send her among people who must always be strangers to her.

So Isabel dreamed away her childhood at her mother's side, or with the sisters in the convent, learning from them such simple and useless matters as they considered necessary for a damosel of family and fortune. On the night of the Señora Valdez's reception, she had astonished every one by the adorable grace of her dancing, and the captivating way in which she used her fan. Her fingers touched the guitar as if they had played it for a thousand years. She sang a Spanish Romancero of El mio Cid with all the fire and tenderness of a Castilian maid.

Her father watched her with troubled eyes. He almost felt as if he had no part in her. And the thought gave him an unusual anxiety, for he knew this night that the days were fast approaching which would test to extremity the affection which bound his family together. He contrived to draw Antonia aside for a few moments.

"Is she not wonderful?" he asked. "When

did she learn these things? I mean the way in which she does them?"

Isabel was dancing La Cachoucha, and Antonia looked at her little sister with eyes full of loving speculation. Her answer dropped slowly from her lips, as if a conviction was reluctantly expressed:

"The way must be a gift from the past—her soul has been at school before she was born here. Father, are you troubled? What is it? Not Isabel, surely?"

"Not Isabel, primarily. Antonia, I have been expecting something for twenty years. It is coming."

"And you are sorry?"

"I am anxious, that is all. Go back to the dancers. In the morning we can talk."

In the morning the doctor was called very early by some one needing his skill. Antonia heard the swift footsteps and eager voices, and watched him mount the horse always kept ready saddled for such emergencies, and ride away with the messenger. The incident in itself was a usual one, but she was conscious that her soul was moving uneasily and questioningly in some new and uncertain atmosphere.

She had felt it on her first entrance into Señora Valdez's gran sala—a something irrepressible in the faces of all the men present. She remembered that even the servants had been excited, and that they stood in small groups, talking with suppressed passion and with much demonstrativeness. And the officers from the Alamo! How conscious they had been of their own importance! What airs of condescension and of an almost insufferable protection they had assumed! Now, that she recalled the faces of Judge Valdez, and other men of years and position, she understood that there had been in them something out of tone with the occasion. In the atmosphere of the festa she had only felt it. In the solitude of her room she could apprehend its nature.

For she had been born during those stormy days when Magee and Bernardo, with twelve hundred Americans, first flung the banner of Texan independence to the wind; when the fall of Nacogdoches sent a thrill of sympathy through the United States, and enabled Cos and Toledo, and the other revolutionary generals in Mexico, to carry their arms against Old Spain to the very doors of the vice-royal

palace. She had heard from her father many a time the whole brave, brilliant story—the same story which has been made in all ages from the beginning of time. Only the week before, they had talked it over as they sat under the great fig-tree together.

"History but repeats itself," the doctor had said then; "for when the Mexicans drove the Spaniards, with their court ceremonies, their monopolies and taxes, back to Spain, they were just doing what the American colonists did, when they drove the English royalists back to England. It was natural, too, that the Americans should help the Mexicans, for, at first, they were but a little band of patriots; and the American-Saxon has like the Anglo-Saxon an irresistible impulse to help the weaker side. And oh, Antonia! The cry of Freedom! Who that has a soul can resist it?"

She remembered this conversation as she stood in the pallid dawning, and watched her father ride swiftly away. The story of the long struggle in all its salient features flashed through her mind; and she understood that it is not the sword alone that gives liberty—that there must be patience before courage; that

great ideas must germinate for years in the hearts of men before the sword can reap the harvest.

The fascinating memory of Burr passed like a shadow across her dreaming. The handsome Lafayettes—the gallant Nolans—the daring Hunters — the thousands of forgotten American traders and explorers—bold and enterprising—they had sown the seed. For great ideas are as catching as evil ones. A Mexican, with the iron hand of Old Spain upon him and the shadow of the Inquisition over him, could not look into the face of an American, and not feel the thought of Freedom stirring in his heart.

It stirred in her own heart. She stood still a moment to feel consciously the glow and the enlargement. Then with an impulse natural, but neither analyzed nor understood, she lifted her prayer-book, and began to recite "the rising prayer." She had not said to herself, "from the love of Freedom to the love of God, it is but a step," but she experienced the emotion and felt all the joy of an adoration, simple and unquestioned, springing as naturally from the soul as the wild flower from the prairie.

As she knelt, up rose the sun, and flooded her white figure and her fair unbound hair with the radiance of the early morning. The matin bells chimed from the convent and the churches, and the singing birds began to flutter their bright wings, and praise God also, "in their Latin."

She took her breakfast alone. The Señora never came downstairs so early. Isabel had wavering inclinations, and generally followed them. Sometimes, even her father had his cup of strong coffee alone in his study; so the first meal of the day was usually, as perhaps it ought to be, a selfishly-silent one. "Too much enthusiasm and chattering at breakfast, are like too much red at sunrise," the doctor always said; "a dull, bad day follows it"—and Antonia's observation had turned the little maxim into a superstition.

In the Señora's room, the precept was either denied, or defied. Antonia heard the laughter and conversation through the closed door, and easily divined the subject of it. It was but natural. The child had a triumph; one that appealed strongly to her mother's pride and predilections. It was a pleasant sight to see

them in the shaded sunshine exulting themselves happily in it.

The Señora, plump and still pretty, reclined upon a large gilded bed. Its splendid silk coverlet and pillows cased in embroidery and lace made an effective background for her. She leaned with a luxurious indolence among them, sipping chocolate and smoking a cigarrito. Isabel was on a couch of the same description. She wore a satin petticoat, and a loose linen waist richly trimmed with lace. It showed her beautiful shoulders and arms to perfection. Her hands were folded above her head. Her tiny feet, shod in satin, were quivering like a bird's wings, as if they were keeping time with the restlessness of her spirit.

She had large eyes, dark and bright; strong eyebrows, a pale complexion with a flood of brilliant color in the cheeks, dazzling even teeth, and a small, handsome mouth. Her black hair was loose and flowing, and caressed her cheeks and temples in numberless little curls and tendrils. Her face was one flush of joy and youth. She had a look half-earnest and half-childlike, and altogether charming. Antonia adored her, and she was pleased to

listen to the child, telling over again the pretty things that had been said to her.

"Only Don Luis was not there at all, Antonia. There is always something wanting," and her voice fell with those sad inflections that are often only the very excess of delight.

The Señora looked sharply at her. "Don Luis was not desirable. He was better away—much better!"

"But why?"

"Because, Antonia, he is suspected. There is an American called Houston. Don Luis met him in Nacogdoches. He has given his soul to him, I think. He would have fought Morello about him, if the captain could have drawn his sword in such a quarrel. I should not have known about the affair had not Señora Valdez told me. Your father says nothing against the Americans."

"Perhaps, then, he knows nothing against them."

"You will excuse me, Antonia; not only the living but the dead must have heard of their wickedness. They are a nation of ingrates. Ingrates are cowards. It was these words Captain Morello said, when Don Luis drew his

sword, made a circle with its point and stood it upright in the centre. It was a challenge to the whole garrison, and about this fellow Houston, whom he calls his friend! Holy Virgin preserve us from such Mexicans!"

"It is easier to talk than to fight. Morello's tongue is sharper than his sword."

"Captain Morello was placing his sword beside that of Don Luis, when the Commandant interfered. He would not permit his officers to fight in such a quarrel. 'Santo Dios!' he said, 'you shall all have your opportunity very soon, gentlemen.' Just reflect upon the folly of a boy like Don Luis, challenging a soldier like Morello!"

"He was in no danger, mother," said Antonia scornfully. "Morello is a bully, who wears the pavement out with his spurs and sabre. His weapons are for show. Americans, at least, wear their arms for use, and not for ornament."

"Listen, Antonia! I will not have them spoken of. They are Jews—or at least infidels, all of them!—the devil himself is their father—the bishop, when he was here last confirmation, told me so."

"Mother!"

"At least they are unbaptized Christians, Antonia. If you are not baptized, the devil sends you to do his work. As for Don Luis, he is a very Judas! Ah, Maria Santissima! how I do pity his good mother!"

"Poor Don Luis!" said Isabel plaintively. "He is so handsome, and he sings like a very angel. And he loves my father; he wanted to be a doctor, so that he could always be with him. I dare say this man called Houston is no better than a Jew, and perhaps very ugly beside. Let us talk no more about him and the Americans. I am weary of them; as Tia Rachella says, 'they have their spoon in every one's mess.'"

And Antonia, whose heart was burning, only stooped down and closed her sister's pretty mouth with a kiss. Her tongue was impatient to speak for the father, and grandmother, and the friends, so dear to her; but she possessed great discretion, and also a large share of that rarest of all womanly graces, the power under provocation, of "putting on Patience the noble."

## CHAPTER III.

### BUILDERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth and kindling her undazzled eye in the full mid-day beam."—MILTON.

"And from these grounds, concluding as we doe,
Warres causes diuerse, so by consequence
Diuerse we must conclude their natures too:
For war proceeding from Omnipotence,
No doubt is holy, wise, and without error;
The sword, of justice and of sin, the terror."
—LORD BROOKE.

IT is the fashion now to live for the present; but the men of fifty years ago, the men who builded the nation, they reverenced the past, and therefore they could work for the future. As Robert Worth rode through the streets of San Antonio that afternoon, he was thinking, not of his own life, but of his children's and of the generations which should come after them.

The city was flooded with sunshine, and

crowded with a pack-train going to Sonora; the animals restlessly protesting against the heat and flies; their Mexican drivers in the pulqueria, spending their last peso with their compadres, or with the escort of soldiers which was to accompany them—a little squad of small, lithe men, with round, yellow, beardless faces, bearing in a singular degree the stamp of being native to the soil. Their lieutenant, a gorgeously clad officer with a very distinguished air, was coming slowly down the street to join them. He bowed, and smiled pleasantly to the doctor as he passed him, and then in a few moments the word of command and the shouting of men and the clatter of hoofs invaded the enchanted atmosphere like an insult.

But the tumult scarcely jarred with the thoughts of his mind. They had been altogether of war and rumors of war. Every hour that subtile consciousness of coming events, which makes whole communities at times prescient, was becoming stronger. "If the powers of the air have anything to do with the destinies of men," he muttered, "there must be unseen battalions around me. The air I am breathing is charged with the feeling of battle."

After leaving the city there were only a few Mexican huts on the shady road leading to his own house. All within them were asleep, even the fighting cocks tied outside were dozing on their perches. He was unusually weary, he had been riding since dawn, and his heart had not been in sympathy with his body, it had said no good cheer to it, whispered no word of courage or promise.

All at once his physical endurance seemed exhausted, and he saw the white wall and arched gateway of his garden and the turrets of his home with an inexpressible relief. But it was the hour of siesta, and he was always careful not to let the requirements of his profession disturb his household. So he rode quietly to the rear, where he found a peon nodding within the stable door. He opened his eyes unnaturally wide, and rose to serve his master.

"See thou rub the mare well down, and give her corn and water."

"To be sure, Señor, that is to be done. A stranger has been here to-day; an American."

"What did he say to thee?"

"That he would call again, Señor."

The incident was not an unusual one, and it did not trouble the doctor's mind. There was on the side of the house a low extension containing two rooms. These rooms belonged exclusively to him. One was his study, his office, his covert, the place to which he went when he wanted to be alone with his own soul. There were a bed and bath and refreshments in the other room. He went directly to it, and after eating and washing, fell into a profound sleep.

At the hour before Angelus the house was as noisy and busy as if it had been an inn. The servants were running hither and thither, all of them expressing themselves in voluble Spanish. The cooks were quarrelling in the kitchen. Antonia was showing the table men, as she had to do afresh every day, how to lay the cloth and serve the dishes in the American fashion. When the duty was completed, she went into the garden to listen for the Angelus. The young ladies of to-day would doubtless consider her toilet frightfully unbecoming; but Antonia looked lovely in it, though but a white muslin frock, with a straight skirt and low waist and short, full sleeves. It was confined by a

blue belt with a gold buckle, and her feet were in sandalled slippers of black satin.

The Angelus tolled, and the thousands of Hail Maries! which blended with its swinging vibrations were uttered, and left to their fate, as all spoken words must be. Antonia still observed the form. It lent for a moment a solemn beauty to her face. She was about to re-enter the house, when she saw a stranger approaching it. He was dressed in a handsome buckskin suit, and a wide Mexican hat, but she knew at once that he was an American, and she waited to receive him.

As soon as he saw her, he removed his hat and approached with it in his hand. Perhaps he was conscious that the act not only did homage to womanhood, but revealed more perfectly a face of remarkable beauty and nobility. For the rest, he was very tall, powerfully built, elegantly proportioned, and his address had the grace and polish of a cultured gentleman.

"I wish to see Dr. Worth, Dona."

With a gentle inclination of the head, she led him to the door of her father's office. She was the only one in the Doctor's family at all familiar with the room. The Señora said so

many books made her feel as if she were in a church or monastery; she was afraid to say anything but paternosters in it. Isabel cowered before the poor skeleton in the corner, and the centipedes and snakes that filled the bottles on the shelves. There was not a servant that would enter the room.

But Antonia did not regard books as a part of some vague spiritual power. She knew the history of the skeleton. She had seen the death of many of those "little devils" corked up in alcohol. She knew that at this hour, if her father were at home he was always disengaged, and she opened the door fearlessly, saying, "Father, here is a gentleman who wishes to see you."

The doctor had quite refreshed himself, and, in a house-suit of clean, white linen, was lying on a couch reading. He arose with alacrity, and with his pleasant smile seemed to welcome the intruder, as he stepped behind him and closed the door. Antonia had disappeared. They were quite alone.

"You are Doctor Robert Worth, sir?"

Their eyes met, their souls knew each other.

"And you are Sam Houston?"

The questions were answered in a hand grip, a sympathetic smile on both faces—the freemasonry of kindred spirits.

"I have a letter from your son Thomas, doctor, and I think, also, that you will have something to say to me, and I to you."

The most prudent of patriots could not have resisted this man. He had that true imperial look which all born rulers of men possess—that look that half coerces, and wholly persuades. Robert Worth acknowledged its power by his instant and decisive answer.

"I have, indeed, much to say to you. We shall have dinner directly, then you will give the night to me?"

After a short conversation he led him into the sala and introduced him to Antonia. He himself had to prepare the Señora for her visitor, and he had a little quaking of the heart as he entered her room. She was dressed for dinner, and turned with a laughing face to meet him.

"I have been listening to the cooks quarrelling over the olla, Roberto. But what can my poor Manuel say when your Irishwoman attacks him. Listen to her! 'Take your dirty

stew aff the fire then! Shure it isn't fit for a Christian to ate at all!'"

"I hope it is, Maria, for we have a visitor to-night."

"Who, then, my love?"

"Mr. Houston."

"Sam Houston? Holy Virgin of Guadalupe preserve us! I will not see the man."

"I think you will, Maria. He has brought this letter for you from our son Thomas; and he has been so kind as to take charge of some fine horses, and sell them well for him in San Antonio. When a man does us a kindness, we should say thank you."

"That is truth, if the man is not the Evil One. As for this Sam Houston, you should have heard what was said of him at the Valdez's."

"I did hear. Everything was a lie."

"But he is a very common man."

"Maria, do you call a soldier, a lawyer, a member of the United States Congress, a governor of a great State like Tennessee, a common man? Houston has been all of these things."

"It is, however, true that he has lived with Indians, and with those Americans, who are bad, who have no God, who are infidels, and

perhaps even cannibals. If he is a good man, why does he live with bad men? Not even the saints could do that. A good man should be in his home. Why does he not stay at home."

"Alas! Maria, that is a woman's fault. He loved a beautiful girl. He married her. My dear one, she did not bless his life as you have blessed mine. No one knows what his sorrow was, for he told no one. And he never blamed her, only he left his high office and turned his back forever on his home."

"Ah! the cruel woman. Holy Virgin, what hard hearts thou hast to pray for!"

"Come down and smile upon him, Maria. I should like him to see a high-born Mexican lady. Are they not the kindest and fairest among all God's women? I know, at least, Maria, that you are kind and fair"; and he took her hands, and drew her within his embrace.

What good wife can resist her husband's wooing? Maria did not. She lifted her face, her eyes shone through happy tears, she whispered softly: "My Robert, it is a joy to please you. I will be kind; I will be grateful about

Thomas. You shall see that I will make a pleasant evening."

So the triumphant husband went down, proud and happy, with his smiling wife upon his arm. Isabel was already in the room. She also wore a white frock, but her hair was pinned back with gold butterflies, and she had a beautiful golden necklace around her throat. And the Señora kept her word. She paid her guest great attention. She talked to him of his adventures with the Indians. She requested her daughters to sing to him. She told him stories of the old Castilian families with which she was connected, and described her visit to New Orleans with a great deal of pleasant humor. She felt that she was doing herself justice; that she was charming; and, consequently, she also was charmed with the guest and the occasion which had been so favorable to her.

After the ladies had retired, the doctor led his visitor into his study. He sat down silently and placed a chair for Houston. Both men hesitated for a moment to open the conversation. Worth, because he was treading on unknown ground; Houston, because he did not

wish to force, even by a question, a resolution which he felt sure would come voluntarily.

The jar of tobacco stood between them, and they filled their pipes silently. Then Worth laid a letter upon the table, and said: "I unstand from this, that my son Thomas thinks the time has come for decisive action."

"Thomas Worth is right. With such souls as his the foundation of the state must be laid."

"I am glad Thomas has taken the position he has; but you must remember, sir, that he is unmarried and unembarrassed by many circumstances which render decisive movement on my part a much more difficult thing. Yet no man now living has watched the Americanizing of Texas with the interest that I have."

"You have been long on the watch, sir."

"I was here when my countrymen came first, in little companies of five or ten men. I saw the party of twenty, who joined the priest Hidalgo in eighteen hundred and ten, when Mexico made her first attempt to throw off the Spanish yoke."

"An unsuccessful attempt."

"Yes. The next year I made a pretended professional journey to Chihuahua, to try and

save their lives. I failed. They were shot with Hidalgo there."

"Yet the strife for liberty went on."

"It did. Two years afterwards, Magee and Bernardo, with twelve hundred Americans, raised the standard of independence on the Trinity River. I saw them them take this very city, though it was ably defended by Salcedo. They fought like heroes. I had many of the wounded in my house. I succored them with my purse."

"It was a great deed for a handful of men."

"The fame of it brought young Americans by hundreds here. To a man they joined the Mexican party struggling to free themselves from the tyranny of old Spain. I do not think any one of them received money. The love of freedom and the love of adventure were alike their motive and their reward."

"Mexico owed these men a debt she has forgotten."

"She forgot it very quickly. In the following year, though they had again defended San Antonio against the Spaniards, the Mexicans drove all the Americans out of the city their rifles had saved."

"You were here; tell me the true reason."

"It was not altogether ingratitude. It was the instinct of self-preservation. The very bravery of the Americans made the men whom they had defended hate and fear them; and there was a continual influx of young men from the States. The Mexicans said to each other: 'There is no end to these Americans. Very soon they will make a quarrel and turn their arms against us. They do not conform to our customs, and they will not take an order from any officer but their own.'"

Houston smiled. "It is a way the Saxon race has," he said. "The old Britons made the same complaint of them. They went first to England to help the Britons fight the Romans, and they liked the country so well, they determined to stay there. If I remember rightly the old Britons had to let them do so."

"It is an old political situation. You can go back to Genesis and find Pharaoh arguing about the Jews in the same manner."

"What happened after this forcible expulsion of the American element from Texas?"

"Mexican independence was for a time abandoned, and the Spanish viceroys were

more tyrannical than ever. But Americans still came, though they pursued different tactics. They bought land and settled on the great rivers. In eighteen twenty-one, Austin, with the permission of the Spanish viceroy in Mexico, introduced three hundred families."

"That was a step in the right direction; but I am astonished the viceroy sanctioned it."

"Apodoca, who was then viceroy, was a Spaniard of the proudest type. He had very much the same contempt for the Mexicans that an old English viceroy in New York had for the colonists he was sent to govern. I dare say any of them would have permitted three hundred German families to settle in some part of British America, as far from New York as Texas is from Mexico. I do not need to tell you that Austin's colonists are a band of choice spirits, hardy working men, trained in the district schools of New England and New York—nearly every one of them a farmer or mechanic."

"They were the very material liberty needed. They have made homes."

"That is the truth. The fighters who preceded them owned nothing but their horses

and their rifles. But these men brought with them their wives and their children, their civilization, their inborn love of freedom and national faith. They accepted the guarantee of the Spanish government, and they expected the Spanish government to keep its promises."

"It did not."

"It had no opportunity. The colonists were hardly settled when the standard of revolt against Spain was again raised. Santa Anna took the field for a republican form of government, and once more a body of Americans, under the Tennesseean, Long, joined the Mexican army."

"I remember that, well."

"In eighteen twenty-four, Santa Anna, Victoria and Bravo drove the Spaniards forever from Mexico, and then they promulgated the famous constitution of eighteen twenty-four. It was a noble constitution, purely democratic and federal, and the Texan colonists to a man gladly swore to obey it. The form was altogether elective, and what particularly pleased the American element was the fact that the local government of every state was left to itself,"

Houston laughed heartily. "Do you know, Worth," he said, "State Rights is our political religion. The average American citizen would expect the Almighty to conform to a written constitution, and recognize the rights of mankind."

"I don't think he expects more than he gets, Houston. Where is there a grander constitution than is guaranteed to us in His Word; or one that more completely recognizes the rights of all humanity?"

"Thank you, Worth. I see that I have spoken better than I knew. I was sitting in the United States Congress, when this constitution passed, and very much occupied with the politics of Tennessee."

"I will not detain you with Mexican politics. It may be briefly said that for the last ten years there has been a constant fight between Pedraza, Guerrero, Bustamante and Santa Anna for the Presidency of Mexico. After so much war and misery the country is now ready to resign all the blessings the constitution of eighteen twenty-four promised her. For peace she is willing to have a dictator in Santa Anna."

"If Mexicans want a dictator let them bow down to Santa Anna! But do you think the twenty thousand free-born Americans in Texas are going to have a dictator? They will have the constitution of eighteen twenty-four—or they will have independence, and make their own constitution! Yes, sir!"

"You know the men for whom you speak?"

"I have been up and down among them for two years. Just after I came to Texas I was elected to the convention which sent Stephen Austin to Mexico with a statement of our wrongs. Did we get any redress? No, sir! And as for poor Austin, is he not in the dungeons of the Inquisition? We have waited two years for an answer. Great heavens! Doctor, surely that is long enough!"

"Was this convention a body of any influence?"

"Influence! There were men there whose names will never be forgotten. They met in a log house; they wore buckskin and homespun; but I tell you, sir, they were debating the fate of unborn millions."

"Two years since Austin went to Mexico?"

"A two years' chapter of tyranny. In them

Santa Anna has quite overthrown the republic of which we were a part. He has made himself dictator, and, because our authorities have protested against the change, they have been driven from office by a military force. I tell you, sir, the petty outrages everywhere perpetrated by petty officials have filled the cup of endurance. It is boiling over. Now, doctor, what are you going to do? Are you with us, or against us?"

"I have told you that I have been with my countrymen always — heart and soul with them."

The doctor spoke with some irritation, and Houston laid his closed hand hard upon the table to emphasize his reply:

"Heart and soul! Very good! But we want your body now. You must tuck your bowie-knife and your revolvers in your belt, and take your rifle in your hand, and be ready to help us drive the Mexican force out of this very city."

"When it comes to that I shall be no laggard."

But he was deathly pale, for he was suffering as men suffer who feel the sweet bonds of

wife and children and home, and dread the rending of them apart. In a moment, however, the soul behind his white face made it visibly luminous. "Houston," he said, "whenever the cause of freedom needs me, I am ready. I shall want no second call. But is it not possible, that even yet—"

"It is impossible to avert what is already here. Within a few days, perhaps to-morrow, you will hear the publication of an edict from Santa Anna, ordering every American to give up his arms."

"What! Give up our arms! No, no, by Heaven! I will die fighting for mine, rather."

"Exactly. That is how every white man in Texas feels about it. And if such a wonder as a coward existed among them, he understands that he may as well die fighting Mexicans, as die of hunger or be scalped by Indians. A large proportion of the colonists depend on their rifles for their daily food. All of them know that they must defend their own homes from the Comanche, or see them perish. Now, do you imagine that Americans will obey any such order? By all the great

men of seventeen seventy-five, if they did, I would go over to the Mexicans and help them to wipe the degenerate cowards out of existence!"

He rose as he spoke; he looked like a flame, and his words cut like a sword. Worth caught fire at his vehemence and passion. He clasped his hands in sympathy as he walked with him to the door. They stood silently together for a moment on the threshold, gazing into the night. Over the glorious land the full moon hung enamoured. Into the sweet, warm air mockingbirds were pouring low, broken songs of ineffable melody. The white city in the mystical light looked like an enchanted city. It was so still that the very houses looked asleep.

"It is a beautiful land," said the doctor.

"It is worthy of freedom," answered Houston. Then he went with long, swinging steps down the garden, and into the shadows beyond, and Worth turned in and closed the door.

He had been watching for this very hour for twenty years; and yet he found himself wholly unprepared for it. Like one led by

confused and uncertain thoughts, he went about the room mechanically locking up his papers, and the surgical instruments he valued so highly. As he did so he perceived the book he had been reading when Houston entered. It was lying open where he had laid it down. A singular smile flitted over his face. He lifted it and carried it closer to the light. It was his college Cicero.

"I was nineteen years old when I marked that passage," he said; "and I do not think I have ever read it since, until to-night. I was reading it when Houston came into the room. Is it a message, I wonder?—

"'But when thou considerest everything carefully and thoughtfully; of all societies none is of more importance, none more dear, than that which unites us with the commonwealth. Our parents, children, relations and neighbors are dear, but our fatherland embraces the whole round of these endearments. In its defence, who would not dare to die, if only he could assist it?'"

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SHINING BANDS OF LOVE.

"O blest be he! O blest be he!
Let him all blessings prove,
Who made the chains, the shining chains,
The holy chains of love!"

—*Spanish Ballad.*

"If you love a lady bright,
Seek, and you shall find a way
All that love would say, to say;
If you watch the occasion right."

—*Spanish Ballad.*

IN the morning Isabel took breakfast with her sister. This was always a pleasant event to Antonia. She petted Isabel, she waited upon her, sweetened her chocolate, spread her cakes with honey, and listened to all her complaints of Tia Rachela. Isabel came gliding in when Antonia was about half way through the meal. Her scarlet petticoat was gorgeous, her bodice white as snow, her hair glossy as a bird's wing, but her lips drooped and trembled, and there was the shadow of tears in her eyes. Antonia kissed their white

fringed lids, held the little form close in her arms, and fluttered about in that motherly way which Isabel had learned to demand and enjoy.

"What has grieved you this morning, little dove?"

"It is Tia Rachela, as usual. The cross old woman! She is going to tell mi madre something. Antonia, you must make her keep her tongue between her teeth. I promised her to confess to Fray Ignatius, and she said I must also tell mi madre. I vowed to say twenty Hail Marias and ten Glorias, and she said 'I ought to go back to the convent.'"

"But what dreadful thing have you been doing, Iza?"

Iza blushed and looked into her chocolate cup, as she answered slowly: "I gave—a—flower—away. Only a suchil flower, Antonia, that—I—wore—at—my—breast—last—night."

"Whom did you give it to, Iza?"

Iza hesitated, moved her chair close to Antonia, and then hid her face on her sister's breast.

"But this is serious, darling. Surely you did not give it to Señor Houston?"

"Could you think I was so silly? When madre was talking to him last night, and when I was singing my pretty serenade, he heard nothing at all. He was thinking his own thoughts."

"Not to Señor Houston? Who then? Tell me, Iza."

"To—Don Luis."

"Don Luis! But he is not here. He went to the Colorado."

"How stupid are you, Antonia! In New York they did not teach you to put this and that together. As soon as I saw Señor Houston, I said to myself: 'Don Luis was going to him; very likely they have met each other on the road; very likely Don Luis is back in San Antonio. He would not want to go away without bidding me good-by,' and, of course, I was right."

"But when did you see him last night? You never left the room."

"So many things are possible. My heart said to me when the talk was going on, 'Don Luis is waiting under the oleanders,' and I walked on to the balcony and there he was, and he looked so sad, and I dropped my suchil

flower to him; and Rachela saw me, for I think she has a million eyes,—and that is the whole matter."

"But why did not Don Luis come in?"

"Mi madre forbade me to speak to him. That is the fault of the Valdez's."

"Then you disobeyed mi madre, and you know what Fray Ignatius and the Sisters have taught you about the fourth command."

"Oh, indeed, I did not think of the fourth command! A sin without intention has not penance; and consider, Antonia, I am now sixteen, and they would shut me up like a chicken in its shell. Antonia, sweet Antonia, speak to Rachela, and make your little Iza happy. Fear is so bad for me. See, I do not even care for my cakes and honey this morning."

"I will give Rachela the blue silk kerchief I brought from New York. She will forget a great deal for that, and then, Iza, darling, you must tell Fray Ignatius of your sin, because it is not good to have an unconfessed sin on the soul."

"Antonia, do not say such cruel things. I have confessed to you. Fray Ignatius will give me a hard penance. Perhaps he may say to

mi madre: 'That child had better go back to the convent. I say so, because I have knowledge.' And now I am tired of that life; I am almost a woman, Antonia, am I not?"

Antonia looked tenderly into her face. She saw some inscrutable change there. All was the same, and all was different. She did not understand that it was in the eyes, those lookouts of the soul. They had lost the frank, inquisitive stare of childhood; they were tender and misty; they reflected a heart passionate and fearful, in which love was making himself lord of all.

Antonia was not without experience. There was in New York a gay, handsome youth, to whom her thoughts lovingly turned. She had promised to trust him, and to wait for him, and neither silence nor distance had weakened her faith or her affection. Don Luis had also made her understand how hard it was to leave Isabel, just when he had hoped to woo and win her. He had asked her to watch over his beloved, and to say a word in his favor when all others would be condemning him.

Her sympathy had been almost a promise, and, indeed, she thought Isabel could hardly have a more suitable lover. He was handsome,

gallant, rich, and of good morals and noble family. They had been much together in their lives; their childish affection had been permitted; she felt quite sure that the parents of both had contemplated a stronger affection and a more lasting tie between them.

And evidently Don Luis had advanced further in his suit than the Señora was aware of. He had not been able to resist the charm of secretly wooing the fresh young girl he hoped to make his wife. Their love must be authorized and sanctioned; true, he wished that; but the charm of winning the prize before it was given was irresistible. Antonia comprehended all without many words; but she took her sister into the garden, where they could be quite alone, and she sought the girl's confidence because she was sure she could be to her a loving guide.

Isabel was ready enough to talk, and the morning was conducive to confidence. They strolled slowly between the myrtle hedges in the sweet gloom of overshadowing trees, hearing only like a faint musical confusion the mingled murmur of the city.

"It was just here," said Isabel, "I was

walking and sitting and doing nothing at all but looking at the trees and the birds and feeling happy, and Don Luis came to me. He might have come down from the skies, I was so astonished. And he looked so handsome, and he said such words! Oh, Antonia! they went straight to my heart."

"When was this, dear?"

"It was in the morning. I had been to mass with Rachela. I had said every prayer with my whole heart, and Rachela told me I might stay in the garden until the sun grew hot. And as soon as Rachela was gone, Don Luis came—came just as sudden as an angel."

"He must have followed you from mass."

"Perhaps."

"He should not have done that."

"If a thing is delightful, nobody should do it. Luis said he knew that it was decided that we should marry, but that he wanted me to be his wife because I loved him. His face was shining with joy, his eyes were like two stars, he called me his life, his adorable mistress, his queen, and he knelt down and took my hands and kissed them. I was too happy to speak."

"Oh, Iza!"

"Very well, Antonia! It is easy to say 'Oh, Iza'; but what would you have done? And reflect on this; no one, not even Rachela, saw him. So then, our angels were quite agreeable and willing. And I—I was in such joy, that I went straight in and told Holy Maria of my happiness. But when a person has not been in love, how can they know; and I see that you are going to say as Sister Sacrementa said to Lores Valdez—'You are a wicked girl, and such things are not to be spoken of!'"

"Oh, my darling one, I am not so cruel. I think you did nothing very wrong, Iza. When love comes into your soul, it is like a new life. If it is a pure, good love, it is a kind of murder to kill it in any way."

"It has just struck me, Antonia, that you may be in love also."

"When I was in New York, our brother Jack had a friend, and he loved me, and I loved him."

"But did grandmamma let him talk to you?"

"He came every night. We went walking and driving. In the summer we sailed upon the river; in the winter we skated upon the

ice. He helped me with my lessons. He went with me to church."

"And was grandmamma with you?"

"Very seldom. Often Jack was with us; more often we were quite alone."

"Holy Virgin! Who ever heard tell of such good fortune? Consuelo Ladrello had never been an hour alone with Don Domingo before they were married."

"A good girl does not need a duenna to watch her; that is what I think. And an American girl, pure and free, would not suffer herself to be watched by any woman, old or young. Her lover comes boldly into her home; she is too proud to meet him in secret."

"Ah! that would be a perfect joy. That is what I would like! But fancy what Rachela would say; and mi madre would cover her eyes and refuse to see me if I said such words. Believe this. It was in the spring Luis told me that he loved me, and though I have seen him often since, he has never found another moment to speak to me alone, not for one five minutes. Oh, Antonia! let me have one five minutes this afternoon! He is going away,

and there is to be war, and I may never, never see him again!"

"Do not weep, little dove. How can you see him this afternoon?"

"He will be here, in this very place, I know he will. When he put the suchil flower to his lips last night he made me understand it. This afternoon, during the hour of siesta, will you come with me? Only for five minutes, Antonia! You can manage Rachela, I am sure you can."

"I can manage Rachela, and you shall have one whole hour, Iza. One whole hour! Come, now, we must make a visit to our mother. She will be wondering at our delay."

The Señora had not yet risen. She had taken her chocolate and smoked her cigarito, but was still drowsing. "I have had a bad night, children," she said; "full of dreadful dreams. It must have been that American. Yet, Holy Mother, how handsome he is! And I assure you that he has the good manners of a courtier. Still, it was an imprudence, and Señora Valdez will make some great thing of it."

"You were in your own house, mother. What has Señora Valdez to do with the guest

in it? We might as well make some great thing about Captain Morello being present at her party."

"I have to say to you, Antonia, that Morello is a Castilian; his family is without a cross. He has the parchments of his noble ancestry to show."

"And Señor Houston is an American—Scotch-American, he said, last night. Pardon, my mother, but do you know what the men of Scotland are?"

"Si! They are monsters! Fray Ignatius has told me. They are heretics of the worst kind. It is their special delight to put to death good Catholic priests. I saw that in a book; it must be true."

"Oh, no, mother! It is not true! It is mere nonsense. Scotchmen do not molest priests, women, and children. They are the greatest fighters in the world."

"Quien sabe? Who has taught you so much about these savages?"

"Indeed, mother, they are not savages. They are a very learned race of men, and very pious also. Jack has many Scotch-American friends. I know one of them very well"; and

with the last words her face flushed, and her voice fell insensibly into slow and soft inflections.

"Jack knows many of them! That is likely. Your father would send him to New York. All kinds of men are in New York. Fray Ignatius says they have to keep an army of police there. No wonder! And my son is so full of nobilities, so generous, so honorable, he will not keep himself exclusive. He is the true resemblance of my brother Don Juan Flores. Juan was always pitying the poor and making friends with those beneath him. At last he went into the convent of the Bernardines and died like a very saint."

"I think our Jack will be more likely to die like a very hero. If there is any thing Jack hates, it is oppression. He would right a beggar, if he saw him wronged."

"Poco à poco! I am tired of rights and wrongs. Let us talk a little about our dresses, for there will be a gay winter. Señora Valdez assured me of it; many soldiers are coming here, and we shall have parties, and cock-fights, and, perhaps, even a bull-feast."

"Oh!" cried Isabel clapping her hands en-

thusiastically; "a bull-feast! That is what I long to see!"

At this moment the doctor entered the room, and Isabel ran to meet him. No father could have resisted her pretty ways, her kisses, her endearments, her coaxing diminutives of speech, her childlike loveliness and simplicity.

"What is making you so happy, Queridita?" *

"Mi madre says there is perhaps to be a bull-feast this winter. Holy Virgin, think of it! That is the one thing I long to see!"

With her clinging arms around him, and her eager face lifted to his for sympathy, the father could not dash the hope which he knew in his heart was very unlikely to be realized. Neither did he think it necessary to express opposition or disapproval for what had as yet no tangible existence. So he answered her with smiles and caresses, and a little quotation which committed him to nothing:

> "As, Panem et Circenses was the cry
> Among the Roman populace of old;
> So, Pan y Toros! is the cry of Spain."

The Señora smiled appreciatively and put out

* Little dear.

her hand. "Pan y Toros!" she repeated. "And have you reflected, children, that no other nation in the world cries it. Only Spain and her children! That is because only men of the Spanish race are brave enough to fight bulls, and only Spanish bulls are brave enough to fight men."

She was quite pleased with herself for this speech, and finding no one inclined to dispute the statement, she went on to describe a festival of bulls she had been present at in the city of Mexico. The subject delighted her, and she grew eloquent over it; and, conscious only of Isabel's shining eyes and enthusiastic interest, she did not notice the air of thoughtfulness which had settled over her husband's face, nor yet Antonia's ill-disguised weariness and anxiety.

On the night of the Valdez's party her father had said he would talk with her. Antonia was watching for the confidence, but not with any great desire. Her heart and her intelligence told her it would mean trouble, and she had that natural feeling of youth which gladly postpones the evil day. And while her father was silent she believed there were still

possibilities of escape from it. So she was not sorry that he again went to his office in the city without any special word for her. It was another day stolen from the uncertain future, for the calm usage of the present, and she was determined to make happiness in it.

When all was still in the afternoon Isabel came to her. She would not put the child to the necessity of again asking her help. She rose at once, and said:

"Sit here, Iza, until I have opened the door for us. Then she took a rich silk kerchief, blue as the sky, in her hand, and went to the wide, matted hall. There she found Rachela asleep on a cane lounge. Antonia woke her.

"Rachela, I wish to go into the garden for an hour."

The Señorita does the thing she wants to. Rachela would not presume to interfere. The Señorita became an Americano in New York."

"There are good things in New York, Rachela; for instance, this kerchief."

"That is indeed magnificent!"

"If you permit my sister to walk in the garden with me, I shall give it to you this moment,"

"Doña Isabel is different. She is a Mexicaine. She must be watched continually."

"For what reason? She is as innocent as an angel."

"Let her simply grow up, and you will see that she is not innocent as the angels. Oh, indeed! I could say something about last night! Doña Isabel has no vocation for a nun; but, grácias á Dios! Rachela is not yet blind or deaf."

"Let the child go with me for an hour, Rachela. The kerchief will be so becoming to you. There is not another in San Antonio like it."

Rachela was past forty, but not yet past the age of coquetry. "It will look gorgeous with my gold ear-rings, but—"

"I will give you also the blue satin bow like it, to wear at your breast."

"Si, si! I will give the permission, Señorita—for your sake alone. The kerchief and bow are a little thing to you. To me, they will be a great adornment. You are not to leave the garden, however, and for one hour's walk only, Señorita; certainly there is time for no more."

"I will take care of Isabel; no harm shall come to her. You may keep your eyes shut for one hour, Rachela, and you may shut your ears also, and put your feet on the couch and let them rest. I will watch Isabel carefully, be sure of that."

"The child is very clever, and she has a lover already, I fear. Keep your eyes on the myrtle hedge that skirts the road. I have to say this—it is not for nothing she wants to walk with you this afternoon. She would be better fast asleep."

In a few moments the kerchief and the bow were safely folded in the capacious pocket of Rachela's apron, and Isabel and Antonia were softly treading the shady walk between the myrtle hedges. Rachela's eyes were apparently fast closed when the girls pased her, but she did not fail to notice how charmingly Isabel had dressed herself. She wore, it is true, her Spanish costume; but she had red roses at her breast, and her white lace mantilla over her head.

"Ah! she is a clever little thing!" Rachela muttered. "She knows that she is irresistible in her Castilian dress. Bah! those French

frocks are enough to drive a man a mile away. I can almost forgive her now. Had she worn the French frock I would not have forgiven her. I would never have yielded again, no, not even if the Señorita Antonia should offer me her scarlet Indian shawl worked in gold. I was always a fool—Holy Mother forgive me! Well, then; I used to have my own lovers—plenty of them—handsome young arrieros and rancheros; there was Tadeo, a valento of the first class; and Buffa—and—well, I will sleep; they do not remember me, I dare say; and I have forgotten their names."

In the mean time the sisters sat down beneath a great fig-tree. No sunshine, no shower, could penetrate its thick foliage. The wide space beneath the spreading branches was a little parlor, cool and sweet, and full of soft, green lights, and the earthy smell of turf, and the wandering scents of the garden.

Isabel's eyes shone with an incomparable light. She was pale, but exquisitely beautiful, and even her hands and feet expressed the idea of expectation. Antonia had a piece of needlework in her hand. She affected the

calmness she did not feel, for her heart was trembling for the tender little heart beating with so much love and anxiety beside her.

But Isabel's divination, however arrived at, was not at fault. In a few moments Don Luis lightly leaped the hedge, and without a moment's hesitation sought the shadow of the fig-tree. As he approached, Antonia looked at him with a new interest. It was not only that he loved Isabel, but that Isabel loved him. She had given him sympathy before, now she gave him a sister's affection.

"How handsome he is!" she thought. "How gallant he looks in his velvet and silver and embroidered jacket! And how eager are his steps! And how joyful his face! He is the kind of Romeo that Shakespeare dreamed about! Isabel is really an angel to him. He would really die for her. What has this Spanish knight of the sixteenth century to do in Texas in the nineteenth century?"

He answered her mental question in his own charming way. He was so happy, so radiantly happy, so persuasive, so compelling, that Antonia granted him, without a word, the favor his eyes asked for. And the lovers hardly

heard the excuse she made; they understood nothing of it, only that she would be reading in the myrtle walk for one hour, and, by so doing, would protect them from intrusion.

One whole hour! Isabel had thought the promise a perfect magnificence of opportunity. But how swiftly it went. Luis had not told her the half of his love and his hopes. He had been forced to speak of politics and business, and every such word was just so many stolen from far sweeter words—words that fell like music from his lips, and were repeated with infinite power from his eyes. Low words, that had the pleading of a thousand voices in them; words full of melody, thrilling with romance; poetical, and yet real as the sunshine around them.

In lovers of a colder race, bound by conventional ties, and a dress rigorously divested of every picturesque element, such wooing might have appeared ridiculous; but in Don Luis, the most natural thing about it was its extravagance. When he knelt at the feet of his beloved and kissed her hands, the action was the unavoidable outcome of his temperament. When he said to her, "Angel mio! you

are the light of my darkness, the perfume of all flowers that bloom for me, the love of my loves, my life, my youth, my lyre, my star, had I a thousand souls with which to love, I would give them all to you!" he believed every word he uttered, and he uttered every word with the passion of a believer.

He stirred into life also in the heart of Isabel a love as living as his own. In that hour she stepped outside all of her childhood's immaturities. She became a woman. She accepted with joyful tears a woman's lot of love and sorrow. She said to Antonia:

"Luis was in my heart before; now, I have put him in my soul. My soul will never die. So I shall never forget him—never cease to love him."

Rachela faithfully kept her agreement. For one hour she was asleep to all her charge did, and Isabel was in her own room when the precious sixty minutes were over. Happy? So happy that her soul seemed to have pushed her body aside, as a thing not to be taken into account. She sang like a bird for very gladsomeness. It was impossible for her to be still, and as she went about her room with

little dancing, balancing movements of her hands and feet, Antonia knew that they were keeping their happy rhythmic motion to the melody love sang in her heart.

And she rejoiced with her little sister, though she was not free from a certain regret for her concession, for it is the after-reckoning with conscience that is so disagreeably strict and uncomfortable. And yet, why make an element of anger and suspicion between Isabel and her mother when there appeared to be no cause to do so? Don Luis was going away. He was in disgrace with his family—almost disinherited; the country was on the point of war, and its fortunes might give him some opportunities no one now foresaw. But if Isabel's mother had once declared that she would "never sanction the marriage," Antonia knew that, however she might afterwards regret her haste and prejudice, she would stand passionately by her decision. Was it not better, then, to prevent words being said which might cause sorrow and regret in the future?

But as regarded Isabel's father, no such reason existed. The happiness of his children

was to him a more sacred thing than his own prejudices. He liked Don Luis, and his friendship with his mother, the Señora Alveda, was a long and tried one. The youth's political partialities, though bringing him at present into disgrace, were such as he himself had largely helped to form. Antonia was sure that her father would sympathize with Isabel, and excuse in her the lapse of duty which had given his little girl so much happiness. Yes, it would be right to tell him every thing, and she did not fear but Isabel would agree in her decision.

At this moment Rachela entered. The Señora wished her daughters to call upon the American manteau-maker for her, and the ride in the open carriage to the Plaza would enable them to bow to their acquaintances, and exhibit their last new dresses from New Orleans. Rachela was already prepared for the excursion, and she was not long in attiring Isabel.

"To be sure, the siesta has made you look charming this afternoon," she said, looking steadily into the girl's beaming, blushing face, "and this rose silk is enchanting. Santa Maria,

how I pity the officers who will have the great fortune to see you this afternoon, and break their hearts for the sight! But you must not look at them, mark! I shall tell the Señora if you do. It is enough if they look at you. And the American way of the Señorita Antonia, which is to bow and smile to every admirer, it will but make more enchanting the becoming modesty of the high-born Mexicaine."

"Keep your tongue still, Rachela. Ah! if you strike me, I will go to my father. He will not permit it. I am not a child to be struck and scolded, and told when to open and shut my eyes. I shall do as my sister does, and the Holy Mother herself will be satisfied with me!"

"Chito! Chito!! You wicked one! Oh, Maria Santissima, cast on this child a look of compassion! The American last night has bewitched her! I said that he looked like a Jew."

"I am not wicked, Rachela; and grácias á Dios, there is no Inquisition now to put the question!"

Isabel was in a great passion, or the awful

word that had made lips parch and blanch to utter it for generations would never have been launched at the offending woman's head. But its effect was magical. Rachela put up her hands palm outwards, as if to shield herself from a blow, and then without another word stooped down and tied the satin sandals on Isabel's restless feet. She was muttering prayers during the whole action, for Isabel had been quick to perceive her advantage, and was following it up by a defiant little monologue of rebellious speeches.

In the midst of this scene, Antonia entered. She was dressed for the carriage, and the carriage stood at the door waiting; but her face was full of fear, and she said, hurriedly:

"Rachela, can you not make some excuse to my mother which will permit us to remain at home? Hark! There is something wrong in the city."

In a moment the three women were on the balcony, intently, anxiously listening. Then they were aware of a strange confusion in the subtle, amber atmosphere. It was as if they heard the noise of battle afar off; and Rachela, without a word, glided away to the Señora.

Isabel and Antonia stood hand in hand, listening to the vague trouble and the echo of harsh, grating voices, mingled with the blare of clarions, the roll of drums, and the rattle of scattering rifle-shots. Yet the noises were so blended together, so indistinct, so strangely expressive of both laughter and defiance, that it was impossible to identify or describe them.

Suddenly a horseman came at a rapid pace towards the house, and Antonia, leaning over the balcony, saw him deliver a note to Rachela, and then hurry away at the same reckless speed. The note was from the doctor to his wife, and it did not tend to allay their anxiety. "Keep within the house," it said; "there are difficulties in the city. In an hour or two I will be at home."

But it was near midnight when he arrived, and Antonia saw that he was a different man. He looked younger. His blue eyes shone with the light behind them. On his face there was the impress of an invincible determination. His very walk had lost its listless, gliding tread, and his steps were firm, alert and rapid.

No one had been able to go to bed until he

arrived, though Isabel slept restlessly in her father's chair, and the Señora lay upon the couch, drowsing a little between her frequent attacks of weeping and angry anticipation. For she was sure it was the Americans. "Anything was possible with such a man as Sam Houston near the city."

"Perhaps it is Santa Anna," at length suggested Antonia. "He has been making trouble ever since I can remember. He was born with a sword in his hand, I think."

"Ca! And every American with a rifle in his hand! Santa Anna is a monster, but at least he fights for his own country. Texas is not the country of the Americans."

"But, indeed, they believe that Texas is their country"; and to these words Doctor Worth entered.

"What is the matter? What is the matter, Roberto? I have been made sick with these uncertainties. Why did you not come home at the Angelus?"

"I have had a good reason for my delay, Maria. About three o'clock I received a message from the Señora Alveda, and I visited her. She is in great trouble, and she had not been

able to bear it with her usual fortitude. She had fainted."

"Ah, the poor mother! She has a son who will break her heart."

"She made no complaint of Luis. She is distracted about her country, and as I came home I understood why. For she is a very shrewd woman, and she perceives that Santa Anna is preparing trouble enough for it."

"Well, then, what is it?"

"When I left her house, I noticed many Americans, as well as many Mexicans, on the streets. They were standing together, too; and there was something in their faces, and in the way their arms were carried, which was very striking and portentous. I fancied they looked coldly on me, and I was troubled by the circumstance. In the Plaza I saw the military band approaching, accompanied by half a dozen officers and a few soldiers. The noise stopped suddenly, and Captain Morello proclaimed as a bando (edict) of the highest authority, an order for all Americans to surrender their arms of every description to the officials and at the places notified."

"Very good!"

"Maria, nothing could be worse! Nothing could be more shameful and disastrous. The Americans had evidently been expecting this useless bombast, and ere the words were well uttered, they answered them with a yell of defiance. I do not think more than one proclamation was necessary, but Morello went from point to point in the city and the Americans followed him. I can tell you this, Maria: all the millions in Mexico can not take their rifles from the ten thousand Americans in Texas, able to carry them."

"We shall see! We shall see! But, Roberto, you at least will not interfere in their quarrels. You have never done so hitherto."

"No one has ever proposed to disarm me before, Maria. I tell you frankly, I will not give up a single rifle, or revolver, or weapon of any kind, that I possess. I would rather be slain with them. I have never carried arms before, but I shall carry them now. I apologize to my countrymen for not having them with me this afternoon. My dearest wife! My good Maria! do not cry in that despairing way."

"You will be killed, Roberto! You will be

a rebel! You will be shot like a dog, and then what will become of me and my daughters?"

"You have two sons, Maria. They will avenge their father, and protect their mother and sisters."

"I shall die of shame! I shall die of shame and sorrow!"

"Not of shame, Maria. If I permitted these men to deprive me of my arms, you might well die of shame."

"What is it? Only a gun, or a pistol, that you never use?"

"Great God, Maria! It is everything! It is honor! It is liberty! It is respect to myself! It is loyalty to my country! It is fidelity to my countrymen! It is true that for many years the garrison has fully protected us, and I have not needed to use the arms in my house. But thousands of husbands and fathers need them hourly, to procure food for their children and wives, and to protect them from the savages. One tie binds us. Their cause is my cause. Their country is my country, and their God is my God. Children, am I right or wrong?"

They both stepped swiftly to his side.

Isabel laid her cheek against his, and answered him with a kiss. Antonia clasped his hand, stood close to him, and said: "We are all sure that you are right, dear father. My mother is weary and sick with anxiety, but she thinks so too. Mother always thinks as you do, father. Dear mother, here is Rachela with a cup of chocolate, and you will sleep and grow strong before morning."

But the Señora, though she suffered her daughter's caresses, did not answer them, neither did she speak to her husband, though he opened the door for her and stood waiting with a face full of anxious love for a word or a smile from her. And the miserable wife, still more miserable than her husband, noticed that Isabel did not follow her. Never before had Isabel seemed to prefer any society to her mother's, and the unhappy Señora felt the defection, even amid her graver trouble.

But Isabel had seen something new in her father that night; something that touched her awakening soul with admiration. She lingered with him and Antonia, listening with vague comprehension to their conversation, until

Rachela called her angrily; and as she was not brave enough for a second rebellion that night, she obediently answered her summons.

An hour afterwards, Antonia stepped cautiously within her room. She was sleeping, and smiling in her sleep. Where was her loving, innocent soul wandering? Between the myrtle hedges and under the fig-tree with her lover? Oh, who can tell where the soul goes when sleep gives it some release? Perhaps it is at night our angels need to watch us most carefully. For the soul, in dreams, can visit evil and sorrowful places, as well as happy and holy ones. But Isabel slept and smiled, and Antonia whispered a prayer at her side ere she went to her own rest.

And the waning moon cast a pathetic beauty over the Eden-like land, till dawn brought that mystical silence in which every new day is born. Then Robert Worth rose from the chair in which he had been sitting so long, remembering the past and forecasting the future. He walked to the window, opened it, and looked towards the mountains. They had an ethereal hue, a light without rays, a clearness almost polar in its severity. But in some

way their appearance infused into his soul calmness and strength.

"Liberty has always been bought with life, and the glory of the greatest nations handseled with the blood of their founders." This was the thought in his heart, as looking far off to the horizon, he asked hopefully:

"What then, O God, shall this good land produce,
That Thou art watering it so carefully?"

## CHAPTER V.

### A FAMOUS BARBECUE.

"So when fierce zeal a nation rends,
And stern injustice rules the throne,
Beneath the yoke meek virtue bends,
And modest truth is heard to groan.
But when fair Freedom's star appears,
Then hushed are sighs, and calmed are fears.

And who, when nations long opprest,
Decree to curb the oppressor's pride,
And patriot virtues fire the breast,
Who shall the generous ardor chide?
What shall withstand the great decree,
When a brave nation will be free?"

IT is flesh and blood that makes husbands and wives, fathers and children, and for the next few days these ties were sorely wounded in Robert Worth's house. The Señora was what Rachela called "difficult." In reality, she was angry and sullen. At such times she always went early to mass, said many prayers, and still further irritated herself by unnecessary fasting. But there are few homes which totally escape the visitations of this

pious temper in some form or other. And no creed modifies it; the strict Calvinist and strict Catholic are equally disagreeable while under its influence.

Besides, the Señora, like the ill-tempered prophet, thought she "did well to be angry." She imagined herself deserted and betrayed in all her tenderest feelings, her husband a rebel, her home made desolate, her sons and daughters supporting their father's imprudent views. She could only see one alternative before her; she must choose between her country and her religion, or her husband and children.

True, she had not yet heard from her sons, but she would listen to none of Rachela's hopes regarding them. Thomas had always said yes to all his father's opinions. How could she expect anything from John when he was being carefully trained in the very principles which everywhere made the Americans so irritating to the Mexican government.

Her husband and Antonia she would not see. Isabel she received in her darkened room, with passionate weeping and many reproaches. The unhappy husband had expected this trouble at the outset. It was one

of those domestic thorns which fester and hamper, but to which the very best of men have to submit. He could only send pleasant and affectionate messages by Rachela, knowing that Rachela would deliver them with her own modifications of tone and manner.

"The Señor sends his great love to the Señora. Grace of Mary! If he would do a little as the most wise and tender of spouses wishes him! That would be for the good fortune of every one."

"Ah, Rachela, my heart is broken! Bring me my mantilla. I will go to early mass. when one's husband and children forsake them, who, then, is possible but the Holy Mother?"

"My Señora, you will take cold; the morning is chill; besides, I have to say the streets will be full of those insolent Americans."

"I shall be glad to take cold, perhaps even to die. And the Americans do not offend women. Even the devil has his good points."

"Holy Virgin! Offend women! They do not even think us worth looking at. But then it is an intolerable offence to see them stand-

ing in our streets, as if they had made the whole land."

But this morning, early as it was, the streets were empty of Americans. There had been hundreds of them there at the proclamation; there was not one to be seen twelve hours afterwards. But at the principal rendezvous of the city, and on the very walls of the Alamo, they had left this characteristic notice:

"To Santa Anna:

If you want our arms—take them.

Ten thousand American Texans.

Robert Worth saw it with an irrepressible emotion of pride and satisfaction. He had faithfully fulfilled his promise to his conscience, and, with his rifle across his shoulder, and his revolvers and knife in his belt, was taking the road to his office with a somewhat marked deliberation. He was yet a remarkably handsome man; and what man is there that a rifle does not give a kind of nobility to? With an up-head carriage and the light of his soul in his face, he trod the narrow, uneven street like a soldier full of enthusiasm at his own commission.

No one interfered with his solitary parade. He perceived, indeed, a marked approval of it. The Zavalas, Navarros, Garcias, and other prominent citizens, addressed him with but a slightly repressed sympathy. They directed his attention with meaning looks to the counter-proclamation of the Americans. They made him understand by the pressure of their hands that they also were on the side of liberty.

As he did not hurry, he met several officers, but they wisely affected not to see what they did not wish to see. For Doctor Worth was a person to whom very wide latitude might be given. To both the military and the civilians his skill was a necessity. The attitude he had taken was privately discussed, but no one publicly acted or even commented upon it. Perhaps he was a little disappointed at this. He had come to a point when a frank avowal of his opinions would be a genuine satisfaction; when, in fact, his long-repressed national feeling was imperious.

On the third morning, as he crossed the Plaza, some one called him. The voice made his heart leap; his whole nature responded to it like the strings of a harp to the sweep of a

skilful hand. He turned quickly, and saw two young men galloping towards him. The foremost figure was his son—his beloved youngest son—whom he had just been thinking of as well out of danger, safe and happy in the peaceful halls of Columbia. And lo! here he was in the very home of the enemy; and he was glad of it.

"Why, Jack!" he cried; "Why, Jack, my boy! I never thought of you here." He had his hand on the lad's shoulder, and was gazing into his bright face with tears and smiles and happy wonder.

"Father, I had to come. And there are plenty more coming. And here is my other self—the best fellow that ever lived: Darius Grant. 'Dare' we call him, father, for there is not anything he won't venture if he thinks it worth the winning. And how is *mi madre* and Antonia, and Iza? And isn't it jolly to see you with a rifle?"

"Well, Dare; well, Jack; you are both welcome; never so welcome to Texas as at this hour. Come home at once and refresh yourselves."

There was so much to tell that at first the

conversation was in fragments and exclamations, and the voices of the two young men, pitched high and clear in their excitement, went far before them as if impatient of their welcome. Antonia heard them first. She was on the balcony, standing thoughtful and attent. It seemed to her as if in those days she was always listening. Jack's voice was the loudest, but she heard Dare's first. It vibrated in mid-air and fell upon her consciousness, clear and sweet as a far-away bell.

"That is Dare's voice—*here*."

She leaned forward, her soul hearkened after the vibrations, and again they called her. With swift steps she reached the open door. Rachela sat in her chair within it.

"The Señorita had better remain within," she said, sullenly; "the sun grows hot."

"Let me pass, Rachela, I am in a hurry."

"To be sure, the Señorita will have her way—good or bad."

Antonia heeded her not; she was hastening down the main avenue toward the gateway. This avenue was hedged on each side with oleanders, and they met in a light, waving arch above her head. At this season they were one

mass of pale pink blossoms and dark glossy leaves. The vivid sunshine through them made a rosy light which tinged her face and her white gown with an indescribable glow. If a mortal woman can ever look like an angel, the fair, swiftly moving Antonia had at that moment the angelic expression of joy and love; the angelic unconsciousness of rapid and graceful movement; the angelic atmosphere that was in itself a dream of paradise; rose-tinted, divinely sweet and warm.

Dare saw her coming, and suddenly ceased speaking He was in the midst of a sentence, but he forgot what he was saying. He forgot where he was. He knew nothing, felt nothing, saw nothing, heard nothing but Antonia. And yet he did not fall at her feet, and kiss her hands and whisper delightful extravagances; all of which things an Iberian lover would have done, and felt and looked in the doing perfectly graceful and natural.

Dare Grant only clasped both the pretty hands held out to him; only said "Antonia! Antonia!" only looked at her with eyes full of a loving question, which found its instant answer in her own. In that moment they revealed to

each other the length and breadth, the height and the depth of their affection. They had not thought of disguising it; they made no attempt to do so; and Robert Worth needed not the confession which, a few hours later, Grant thought it right to make to him.

When they entered the house together, a happy, noisy group, Rachela had left her chair and was going hurriedly upstairs to tell the Señora her surmise; but Jack passed her with a bound, and was at his mother's side before the heavy old woman had comprehended his passing salutation.

"Madre! Mother, I am here!"

The Señora was on her couch in her darkened room. She had been at the very earliest mass, had a headache, and had come home in a state of rebellion against heaven and earth. But Jack was her idol, the one child for whose presence she continually pined, the one human creature to whose will and happiness she delighted to sacrifice her own. When she heard his voice she rose quickly, crying out:

"A miracle! A miracle! Grace of God and Mary, a miracle! Only this morning, my precious, my boy! I asked the Holy Mother to

pity my sorrows, and send you to me. I vow to Mary a new shrine. I vow to keep it, and dress it for one whole year. I will give my opal ring to the poor. Oh, Juan! Juan! Juan! I am too blessed."

Her words were broken into pieces by his kisses. He knelt at her knees, and stroked her face, and patted her hands, and did all with such natural fervor and grace, that anything else, or anything less, must have seemed cold and unfilial.

"Come, my beautiful mother, and see my friend. I have told him so much about you; and poor Dare has no mother. I have promised him that you will be his mother also. Dare is so good—the finest fellow in all the world; come down and see Dare, and let us have a real Mexican dinner, madre. I have not tasted an olla since I left you."

She could not resist him. She made Rachela lay out her prettiest dress, and when Jack said "how beautiful your hair is, mother; no one has hair like you!" she drew out the great shell pins, and let it fall like a cloud around her, and with a glad pride gave Rachela the order to get out her jewelled comb and gilded fan and

finest mantilla. And oh! how happy is that mother who has such pure and fervent admiration from her son; and how happy is that son to whom his mother is ever beautiful!

Jack's presence drove all the evil spirits out of the house. The windows were thrown open; the sunshine came in. He was running after Isabel, he was playing the mandolin; his voice, his laugh, his quick footstep, were everywhere.

In spite of the trouble in the city, there was a real festival in the house. The Señora came down in her sweetest temper and her finest garments. She arranged Jack's dinner herself, selected the dishes and gave strict orders about their serving. She took Jack's friend at once into her favor, and Dare thought her wonderfully lovely and gracious. He sat with her on the balcony, and talked of Jack, telling her how clever he was, and how all his comrades loved him for his sunny temper and affectionate heart.

It was a happy dinner, lengthened out with merry conversation. Every one thought that a few hours might be given to family love and family joy. It would be good to have the memory of them in the days that were fast

coming. So they sat long over the sweetmeats, and fresh figs, and the pale wines of Xeres and Alicante. And they rose up with laughter, looking into each others' faces with eyes that seemed to bespeak love and remembrance. And then they went from the table, and saw not Destiny standing cold and pitiless behind them, marking two places for evermore vacant.

There was not much siesta that day. The Señora, Isabel and Jack sat together; the Señora dozed a little, but not enough to lose consciousness of Jack's presence and Jack's voice. The father, happy, and yet acutely anxious, went to and fro between his children and his study. Antonia and Dare were in the myrtle walk or under the fig-tree. This hour was the blossoming time of their lives. And it was not the less sweet and tender because of the dark shadows on the edge of the sunshine. Nor were they afraid to face the shadows, to inquire of them, and thus to taste the deeper rapture of love when love is gemmed with tears.

It was understood that the young men were going away in the morning very early; so early that their adieus must be said with their

good-nights. It was at this hour that the Señora found courage to ask:

"My Juan, where do you go?"

"To Gonzales, mi madre."

"But why? Oh, Juan, do not desert your madre, and your country!"

"Desert you, madre! I am your boy to my last breath! My country I love with my whole soul. That is why I have come back to you and to her! She is in trouble and her sons must stand by her."

"Do not talk with two meanings. Oh, Juan! why do you go to Gonzales?"

"We have heard that Colonel Ugartchea is to be there soon, and to take away the arms of the Americans. That is not to be endured. If you yourself were a man, you would have been away ere this to help them, I am sure."

"*Me!!* The Blessed Virgin knows I would ut off my hands and feet first. Juan, listen to me dear one! You are a Mexican."

"My heart is Mexican, for it is yours. But I must stand with my father and with my brother, and with my American compatriots. Are we slaves, that we must give up our arms?

No, but if we gave them up we should deserve to be slaves."

"God and the saints!" she answered, passionately. "What a trouble about a few guns! One would think the Mexicans wanted the wives and children, the homes and lands of the Americans. They cry out from one end of Texas to the other."

"They cry out in old England and in New England, in New York, in New Orleans, and all down the Mississippi. And men are crying back to them: 'Stand to your rifles and we will come and help you!' The idea of disarming ten thousand Americans!" Jack laughed with scornful amusement at the notion. "What a game it will be! Mother, you can't tell how a man gets to love his rifle. He that takes our purse takes trash; but our rifles! By George Washington, that's a different story!"

"Juan, my darling, you are my last hope. Your brother was born with an American heart. He has even become a heretic. Fray Ignatius says he went into the Colorado and was what they call immersed; he that was baptized with holy water by the thrice holy bishop

of Durango. My beloved one, go and see Fray Ignatius; late as it is, he will rise and counsel you."

"My heart, my conscience, my country, my father, my brother, Santa Anna's despotism, have already counselled me."

"Speak no more. I see that you also are a rebel and a heretic. Mother of sorrows, give me thy compassion!" Then, turning to Juan, she cried out: "May God pardon me for having brought into this world such ingrates! Go from me! You have broken my heart!"

He fell at her feet, and, in spite of her reluctance, took her hands—

"Sweetest mother, wait but a little while. You will see that we are right. Do not be cross with Juan. I am going away. Kiss me, mother. Kiss me, and give me your blessing."

"No, I will not bless you. I will not kiss you. You want what is impossible, what is wicked."

"I want freedom."

"And to get freedom you tread upon your mother's heart. Let loose my hands. I am weary to death of this everlasting talk of

freedom. I think indeed that the Americans know but two words: freedom and dollars. Ring for Rachela. She, at least, is faithful to me."

"Not till you kiss me, mother. Do not send me away unblessed and unloved. That is to doom me to misfortune. *Mi madre*, I beg this favor from you." He had risen, but he still held her hands, and he was weeping as innocent young men are not ashamed to weep.

If she had looked at him! Oh, if she had but once looked at his face, she could not have resisted its beauty, its sorrow, its imploration! But she would not look. She drew her hands angrily away from him. She turned her back upon her suppliant son and imperiously summoned Rachela.

"Good-by, mi madre."

"Good-by, mi madre!"

She would not turn to him, or answer him a word.

"Mi madre, here comes Rachela! Say 'God bless you, Juan.' It is my last word, sweet mother!"

She neither moved nor spoke. The next

moment Rachela entered, and the wretched woman abandoned herself to her care with vehement sobs and complainings.

Jack was inexpressibly sorrowful. He went into the garden, hoping in its silence and solitude to find some relief. He loved his mother with his strongest affection. Every one of her sobs wrung his heart. Was it right to wound and disobey her for the sake of—freedom? Mother was a certain good; freedom only a glorious promise. Mother was a living fact; freedom an intangible idea.

Ah, but men have always fought more passionately for ideas than for facts! Tyrants are safe while they touch only silver and gold; but when they try to bind a man's ideals—the freedom of his citizenship—the purity of his faith—he will die to preserve them in their integrity.

Besides, freedom for every generation has but her hour. If that hour is not seized, no other may come for the men who have suffered it to pass. But mother would grow more loving as the days went by. And this was ever the end of Jack's reasoning; for no man knows how deep the roots of his nature

strike into his native land, until he sees her in the grasp of a tyrant, and hears her crying to him for deliverance.

The struggle left the impress on his face. He passed a boundary in it. Certain boyish feelings and graces would never again be possible to him. He went into the house, weary, and longing for companionship that would comfort or strengthen him. Only Isabel was in the parlor. She appeared to be asleep among the sofa cushions, but she opened her eyes wide as he took a chair beside her.

"I have been waiting to kiss you again, Juan; do you think this trouble will last very long?"

"It will be over directly, Iza. Do not fret yourself about it, angel mio. The Americans are great fighters, and their quarrel is just. Well, then, it will be settled by the good God quickly."

"Rachela says that Santa Anna has sent off a million of men to fight the Americans. Some they will cut in pieces, and some are to be sent to the mines to work in chains."

"God is not dead of old age, Iza. Santa Anna is a miraculous tyrant. He has com-

mitted every crime under heaven, but I think he will not cut the Americans in pieces."

"And if the Americans should even make him go back to Mexico!"

"I think that is very possible."

"What then, Juan?"

"He would pay for some of his crimes here; the rest he would settle for in purgatory. And you, too, Iza, are you with the Americans?"

"Luis Alveda says they are right."

"Oh–h! I see! So Luis is to be my brother too. Is that so, little dear?"

"Have you room in your heart for him? Or has this Dare Grant filled it?"

"If I had twenty sisters, I should have room for twenty brothers, if they were like Dare and Luis. But, indeed, Luis had his place there before I knew Dare."

"And perhaps you may see him soon; he is with Señor Sam Houston. Señor Houston was here not a week ago. Will you think of that? And the mother and uncle of Luis are angry at him; he will be disinherited, and we shall be very poor, I think. But there is always my father, who loves Luis."

"Luis will win his own inheritance. I think you will be very rich."

"And, Juan, if you see Luis, say to him, 'Iza thinks of you continually.'"

At this moment Rachela angrily called her charge—

"Are you totally and forever wicked, disobedient one? Two hours I have been kept waiting. Very well! The Sisters are the only duenna for you; and back to the convent you shall go to-morrow. The Señora is of my mind, also."

"My father will not permit it. I will go to my father. And think of this, Rachela: I am no longer to be treated like a baby." But she kissed Juan 'farewell,' and went away without further dispute.

The handsome room looked strangely lonely and desolate when the door had closed behind her. Jack rose, and roughly shook himself, as if by that means he hoped to throw off the oppression and melancholy that was invading even his light heart. Hundreds of moths were dashing themselves to death against the high glass shade that covered the blowing candles from them. He stood and looked at their

hopeless efforts to reach the flame. He had an unpleasant thought; one of those thoughts which have the force of a presentiment. He put it away with annoyance, muttering, "It is time enough to meet misfortune when it comes."

The sound of a footstep made him stand erect and face the door.

It was only a sleepy peon with a request that he would go to his father's study. A different mental atmosphere met him there. The doctor was walking up and down the room, and Dare and Antonia sat together at the open window.

"Your father wants to hear about our journey, Jack. Take my chair and tell him what happened. Antonia and I will walk within hearing; a roof makes me restless such a night as this"; for the waning moon had risen, and the cool wind from the Gulf was shaking a thousand scents from the trees and the flowering shrubs.

The change was made with the words, and the doctor sat down beside his son. "I was asking, Jack, how you knew so much about Texan affairs, and how you came so suddenly to take part in them?"

"Indeed, father, we could not escape knowing. The Texan fever was more or less in every young man's blood. One night Dare had a supper at his rooms, and there were thirty of us present. A man called Faulkner—a fine fellow from Nacogdoches—spoke to us. How do you think he spoke, when his only brother, a lad of twenty, is working in a Mexican mine loaded with chains?"

"For what?"

"He said one day that 'the natural boundaries of the United States are the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.' He was sent to the mines for the words. Faulkner's only hope for him is in the independence of Texas. He had us on fire in five minutes—all but Sandy McDonald, who loves to argue, and therefore took the Mexican side."

"What could he say for it?"

"He said it was a very unjustlike thing to make Mexico give her American settlers in Texas two hundred and twenty-four millions of acres because she thought a change of government best for her own interests."

"The Americans settled in Texas under the solemn guarantee of the constitution of eighteen

twenty-four. How many of them would have built homes under a tyrannical despotism like that Santa Anna is now forcing upon them?" asked the doctor, warmly.

"McDonald said, 'There is a deal of talk about freedom among you Americans, and it just means nothing at all.' You should have seen Faulkner! He turned on him like a tornado. 'How should you know anything about freedom, McDonald?' he cried. 'You are in feudal darkness in the Highlands of Scotland. You have only just emigrated into freedom. But we Americans are born free! If you can not feel the difference between a federal constitution and a military and religious despotism, there is simply no use talking to you. How would you like to find yourself in a country where suddenly trial by jury and the exercise of your religion was denied you? Of course you could abandon the home you had built, and the acres you had bought and put under cultivation, and thus make some Mexican heir to your ten years' labor. Perhaps a Scot, for conscience' sake, would do this.'"

"And what answer made he?"

"He said, 'A Scot kens how to grip tight to

ten years' labor as well as yoursel', Faulkner; and neither man nor de'il can come between him and his religion; but—' '*But*,' shouted Faulkner; 'there is no *but!* It is God and our right! God and our right, against priestcraft and despotism!'

"Then every one of us leaped to our feet, and we swore to follow Faulkner to Texas at an hour's notice; and Sandy said we were 'a parcel of fools'; and then, would you believe it, father, when our boat was leaving the pier, amid the cheers and hurrahs of thousands, Sandy leaped on the boat and joined us?"

"What did he say then?"

"He said, 'I am a born fool to go with you, but I think there is a kind o' witchcraft in that word *Texas*. It has been stirring me up morning and night like the voice o' the charmer, and I be to follow it though I ken well enough it isna leading me in the paths o' peace and pleasantness!'"

"Did you find the same enthusiasm outside of New York?"

"All along the Ohio and Mississippi we gathered recruits; and at Randolph, sixty miles above Memphis, we were joined by David Crockett."

"Jack!"

"True, father! And then at every landing we took on men. For at every landing Crockett spoke to the people; and, as we stopped very often, we were cheered all the way down the river. The *Mediterranean*, though the biggest boat on it, was soon crowded; but at Helena, Crockett and a great number of the leading men of the expedition got off. And as Dare and Crockett had become friends, I followed them."

"Where did you go to?"

"We went ostensibly to a big barbecue at John Bowie's plantation, which is a few miles below Helena. Invitations to this barbecue had been sent hundreds of miles throughout the surrounding country. We met parties from the depths of the Arkansas wilderness and the furthest boundaries of the Choctaw nation coming to it. There were raftsmen from the Mississippi, from the White, and the St. Francis rivers. There were planters from Lousiana and Tennessee. There were woodsmen from Kentucky. There were envoys from New Orleans, Washington, and all the great Eastern cities."

"I had an invitation myself, Jack."

"I wish you had accepted it. It was worth the journey. There never was and there never will be such a barbecue again. Thousands were present. The woods were full of sheds and temporary buildings, and platforms for the speakers."

"Who were the speakers?"

"Crockett, Hawkins, General Montgomery, Colonel Beauford, the three brothers Cheatham, Doc. Bennet, and many others. When the woods were illuminated at night with pine knots, you may imagine the scene and the wild enthusiasm that followed their eloquence."

"Doc. Bennet is a good partisan, and he is enormously rich."

"And he has a personal reason for his hatred of Mexico. An insatiable revenge possesses him. His wife and two children were barbarously murdered by Mexicans. He appealed to those who could not go to the fight to give money to aid it, and on the spot laid down ten thousand dollars."

"Good!"

"Nine other men, either present or there by proxy, instantly gave a like sum, and thirty

thousand in smaller sums was added to it. Every donation was hailed with the wildest transports, and while the woods were ringing with electrifying shouts, Hawkins rallied three hundred men round him and went off at a swinging galop for the Brazos."

"Oh, Jack! Jack!"

"In another hour, the rest of the leaders had gathered their detachments, and every man had turned his face to the Texan prairies. Crockett was already far advanced on the way. Sam Houston was known to be kindling the fire on the spot; and I suppose you know, father," said Jack, sinking his voice to a whisper, "that we have still more powerful backers."

"General Gaines?"

"Well, he has a large body of United States troops at Nacogdoches. He says they are to protect the people of Navasola from the Indians."

"But Navasola is twenty-nine miles west of Nacogdoches."

"Navasola is in Texas. Very well! If the United States feel it to be their duty to protect the people of Navasola, it seems they already consider Texas within their boundary."

"You think the Indians a mere pretext?

"Of course. Crockett has with him an autograph letter from President Jackson, introducing him as 'a God-chosen patriot.' President Jackson already sees Texas in the Union, and Gaines understands that if the American-Texans should be repulsed by Santa Anna, and fall back upon him, that he may then gather them under his standard and lead them forward to victory—and the conquest of Texas. Father, you will see the Stars and Stripes on the palaces of Mexico."

"Do not talk too fast, Jack. And now, go lie down on my bed. In four hours you must leave, if you want to reach Gonzales to-night!"

Then Dare was called, and the lovers knew that their hour of parting was come. They said nothing of the fears in their hearts; and on Antonia's lifted face there was only the light of love and of hope.

"The fight will soon be over, darling, and then!"

"And then? We shall be so happy."

## CHAPTER VI.

### ROBERT WORTH IS DISARMED.

"Strange sons of Mexico, and strange her fate;
They fight for freedom who were never free;
A kingless people for a nerveless state."

* * * * * *

"Not all the threats or favors of a crown,
A Prince's whisper, or a tyrant's frown,
Can awe the spirit or allure the mind
Of him, who to strict Honor is inclined.
Though all the pomp and pleasure that does wait
On public places, and affairs of state;
Though all the storms and tempests should arise,
That Church magicians in their cells devise,
And from their settled basis nations tear:
He would, unmoved, the mighty ruin bear.
Secure in innocence, contemn them all,
And, decently arrayed, in honor fall."

* * * * * *

"Say, what is honor? 'Tis the finest sense
Of justice which the human mind can frame."

THE keenest sufferings entailed by war are not on the battle-field, nor in the hospital. They are in the household. There are the maimed affections, the slain hopes, the broken ties of love. And before a shot had been fired

in the war of Texan independence, the battle had begun in Robert Worth's household.

The young men lay down to rest, but he sat watching the night away. There was a melancholy sleepiness in it; the mockingbirds had ceased singing; the chirping insects had become weary. Only the clock, with its regular "tick, tick," kept the watch with him.

When it was near dawn, he lifted a candle and went into the room where Jack and Dare were sleeping. Dare did not move; Jack opened his eyes wide, and smiled brightly at the intruder.

"Well, father?"

"It is time to get up, Jack. Tell Dare."

In a few minutes both came to him. A bottle of wine, some preserved bears' paws, and biscuits were on the table. They ate standing, speaking very little and almost in whispers; and then the doctor went with them to the stable. He helped Jack to saddle his horse. He found a sad pleasure in coming so close to him. Once their cheeks touched, and the touch brought the tears to his eyes and sent the blood to his heart.

With his hand on the saddle, Jack paused

and said, softly, "Father, dear, tell mi madre my last look at the house, my last thought in leaving it, was for her. She would not kiss me or bless me last night. Ask her to kiss you for me," and then the lad broke fairly down. The moment had come in which love could find no utterance, and must act. He flung his arm around his father's neck and kissed him. And the father wept also, and yet spoke brave words to both as he walked with them to the gate and watched them ride into the thick mist lying upon the prairie like a cloud. They were only darker spots in it. It swallowed them up. They were lost to sight.

He thought no one had seen the boys leave but himself. But through the lattices two sorrowful women also watched their departure. The Señora, as wakeful as her husband, had heard the slight movements, the unusual noises of that early hour, and had divined the cause of them. She looked at Rachela. The woman had fallen into the dead sleep of exhaustion, and she would not have to parry her objections and warnings. Unshod, and in her night-dress, she slipped through the corridor to the back of the house, and tightly clasping her rosary in

her hands, she stood behind the lattice and watched her boy away.

He turned in his saddle just before he passed the gate, and she saw his young face lifted with an unconscious, anxious love, to the very lattice at which she stood. In the dim light it had a strange pallor. The misty air blurred and made all indistinct. It was like seeing her Jack in some woful dream. If he had been dead, such a vision of him might have come to her from the shadow land.

Usually her grief was noisy and imperative of sympathy. But this morning she could not cry nor lament. She went softly back to her room and sat down, with her crucifix before her aching eyes. Yet she could not say her usual prayers. She could not remember anything but Jack's entreaty—"Kiss me, mi madre! Bless me, mi madre!" She could not see anything but that last rapid turn in the saddle, and that piteous young face, showing so weird and dreamlike through the gray mist of the early dawn.

Antonia had watched with her. Dare, also, had turned, but there had been something about Dare's attitude far more cheery and hopeful.

On the previous night Antonia had put some sprays of rosemary in his hat-band "to bring good, and keep away evil on a journey"; and as he turned and lifted his hat he put his lips to them. He had the belief that from some point his Antonia was watching him. He conveyed to her, by the strength of his love and his will, the assurance of all their hopes.

That day Doctor Worth did not go out. The little bravado of carrying arms was impossible to him. It was not that his courage had failed, or that he had lost a tittle of his convictions, but he was depressed by the uncertainty of his position and duty, and he was, besides, the thrall of that intangible anxiety which we call *presentiment*.

Yet, however dreary life is, it must go on. The brave-hearted cannot drop daily duty. On the second day the doctor went to his office again, and Antonia arranged the meals and received company, and did her best to bring the household into peaceful accord with the new elements encroaching on it from all sides.

But the Señora was more "difficult" than even Rachela had ever seen her before. She did not go to church, but Fray Ignatius spent

a great deal of time with her; and his influence was not any more conciliating than that of early masses and much fasting.

He said to her, indeed: "My daughter, you have behaved with the fortitude of a saint. It would have been more than a venial sin, if you had kissed and blessed a rebel in the very act of his rebellion. The Holy Mary will reward and comfort you."

But the Señora was not sensible of the reward and comfort; and she did feel most acutely the cruel wound she had given her mother love. Neither prayers nor penance availed her. She wanted to see Jack. She wanted to kiss him a hundred times, and bless him with every kiss. And it did not help her to be told that these longings were the suggestions of the Evil One, and not to be listened to.

The black-robed monk, gliding about his house with downcast eyes and folded hands, had never seemed to Robert Worth so objectionable. He knew that he kept the breach open between himself and his wife—that he thought it a point of religious duty to do so. He knew that he was gradually isolating the

wretched woman from her husband and children, and that the continual repetition of prayers and penances did not give her any adequate comfort for the wrong she was doing her affections.

The city was also in a condition of the greatest excitement. The soldiers in the Alamo were under arms. Their officers had evidently received important advices from Mexico. General Cos, the brother-in-law of Santa Anna, was now in command, and it was said immense reinforcements were hourly looked for. The drifting American population had entirely vanished, but its palpable absence inspired the most thoughtful of the people with fear instead of security.

Nor were the military by any means sure of the loyalty of the city. It was well known that a large proportion of the best citizens hated the despotism of Santa Anna; and that if the Americans attacked San Antonio, they would receive active sympathy. Party feeling was no longer controllable. Men suspected each other. Duels were of constant occurrence, and families were torn to pieces; for the monks supported Santa Anna with all their

influence, and there were few women who dared to disobey them.

Into the midst of this turbulent, touchy community, there fell one morning a word or two which set it on fire. Doctor Worth was talking on the Plaza with Señor Lopez Navarro. A Mexican soldier, with his yellow cloak streaming out behind him, galloped madly towards the Alamo and left the news there. It spread like wildfire. "There had been a fight at Gonzales, and the Americans had kept their arms. They had also put the Mexicans to flight."

"And more," added a young Mexican coming up to the group of which Robert Worth was one, "Stephen Austin has escaped, and he arrived at Gonzales at the very moment of victory. And more yet: Americans are pouring into Gonzales from every quarter."

An officer tapped Doctor Worth on the shoulder. "Señor Doctor, your arms. General Cos hopes, in the present extremity, you will set an example of obedience."

"I will not give up my arms. In the present extremity my arms are the greatest need I have."

"Then Señor,—it is a great affliction to me—I must arrest you."

He was led away, amid the audible murmurs of the men who filled the streets. There needed but some one to have said the word and they would have taken him forcibly from the military. A great crowd followed him to the gates of the Alamo. For there was scarcely a family in San Antonio of which this good doctor was not an adopted member. The arrest of their favorite confessor would hardly have enraged them more.

Fray Ignatius brought the news to the Señora. Even he was affected by it. Never before had Antonia seen him walk except with thoughtful and deliberate steps. She wondered at his appearance; at its suppressed hurry; at a something in it which struck her as suppressed satisfaction.

And the priest was in his heart satisfied; though he was consciously telling himself that "he was sorry for the Señora, and that he would have been glad if the sins of her husband could have been set against the works of supererogation which the saints of his own convent had amassed."

"But he is an infidel; he believes not in the saints," he muttered; "then how could they avail him!"

Antonia met him at the door. He said an *Ave Maria* as he crossed the threshold, and gave her his hand to kiss. She looked wonderingly in his face, for unless it was a special visit, he never called so near the Angelus. Still, it is difficult to throw off a habit of obedience formed in early youth; and she did not feel as if she could break through the chill atmosphere of the man and ask: "For what reason have you come, father?"

A long, shrill shriek from the Señora was the first answer to the fearful question in her heart. In a few moments she was at her mother's door. Rachela knelt outside it, telling her rosary. She stolidly kept her place, and a certain instinct for a moment prevented Antonia interrupting her. But the passionate words of her mother, blending with the low, measured tones of the priest, were something far more positive.

"Let me pass you, Rachela. What is the matter with my mother?"

The woman was absorbed in her supplica-

tions, and Antonia opened the door. Isabel followed her. They found themselves in the the presence of an angry sorrow that appalled them. The Señora had torn her lace mantilla into shreds, and they were scattered over the room as she had flung them from her hands in her frantic walk about it. The large shell comb that confined her hair was trodden to pieces, and its long coils had fallen about her face and shoulders. Her bracelets, her chain of gold, her brooch and rings were scattered on the floor, and she was standing in the centre of it, like an enraged creature; tearing her handkerchief into strips, as an emphasis to her passionate denunciations.

"It serves him right! *Jesus! Maria! Joseph!* It serves him right! He must carry arms! *He, too!* when it was forbidden! I am glad he is arrested! Oh, Roberto! Roberto!"

"Patience, my daughter! This is the hand of God. What can you do but submit?"

"What is it, *mi madre?*" and Isabel put her arms around her mother with the words *mi madre.* "Tell Isabel your sorrow."

"Your father is arrested—taken to the Alamo—he will be sent to the mines. I told

him so! I told him so! He would not listen to me! How wicked he has been!"

"What has my father done, Fray Ignatius? Why have they arrested him?"

The priest turned to Antonia with a cold face. He did not like her. He felt that she did not believe in him.

"Señorita, he has committed a treason. A good citizen obeys the law; Señor Worth has defied it."

"Pardon, father, I cannot believe it."

"A great forbearance has been shown him, but the end of mercy comes. As he persisted in wearing arms, he has been taken to the Alamo and disarmed."

"It is a great shame! An infamous shame and wrong!" cried Antonia. "What right has any one to take my father's arms? No more than they have to take his purse or his coat."

"General Santa Anna—"

"General Santa Anna is a tyrant and a thief. I care not who says different."

"Antonia! Shameless one!"

"Mother, do not strike me." Then she took her mother's hands in her own, and led her to a couch, caressing her as she spoke—

"Don't believe any one—*any one*, mother, who says wrong of my father. You know that he is the best of men. Rachela! Come here instantly. The rosary is not the thing, now. You ought to be attending to the Señora. Get her some valerian and some coffee, and come and remove her clothing. Fray Ignatius, we will beg you to leave us to-night to ourselves."

"Your mother's sin, in marrying a heretic, has now found her out. It is my duty to make her see her fault."

"My mother had a dispensation from one greater than you."

"Oh, father, pray for me! I accuse myself! I accuse myself! Oh, wretched woman! Oh, cruel husband!"

"Mother, you have been a very happy woman. You have had the best husband in the world. Do not reproach my father for the sins of others. Do not desert him when he is in the power of a human tiger. My God, mother! let us think of something to be done for his help! I will see the Navarros, the Garcias, Judge Valdez; I will go to the Plaza and call on the thousands he has cured and helped, to set him free."

"You will make of yourself something not to be spoken of. This is the judgment of God, my daughter."

"It is the judgment of a wicked man, Fray Ignatius. My mother is not now able to listen to you. Isabel, come here and comfort her." Isabel put her cheek to her mother's; she murmured caressing words; she kissed her face, and coiled up her straggling hair, and with childlike trust amid all, solicited Holy Mary to console them.

Fray Ignatius watched her with a cold scrutiny. He was saying to himself, "It is the fruit of sin. I warned the Señora, when she married this heretic, that trouble would come of it. Very well, it has come. Then like a flash a new thought invaded his mind—If the Señor Doctor disappeared forever, why not induce the Señora and her daughters to go into a religious house? There was a great deal of money. The church could use it well.

Antonia did not understand the thought, but she understood its animus, and again she requested his withdrawal. This time she went close to him, and bravely looked straight into

his eyes. Their scornful gleam sent a chill to her heart like that of cold steel. At that moment she understood that she had turned a passive enemy into an active one.

He went, however, without further parley, stopping only to warn the Señora against the sin "of standing with the enemies of God and the Holy Church," and to order Isabel to recite for her mother's pardon and comfort a certain number of aves and paternosters. Antonia went with him to the door, and ere he left he blessed her, and said: "The Señorita will examine her soul and see her sin. Then the ever merciful Church will hear her confession, and give her the satisfying penance."

Antonia bowed in response. When people are in great domestic sorrow, self-examination is a superfluous advice. She listened a moment to his departing footsteps, shivering as she stood in the darkness, for a norther had sprung up, and the cold was severe. She only glanced into the pleasant parlor where the table was laid for dinner, and a great fire of cedar logs was throwing red, dancing lights over the white linen and the shining silver and glass. The chairs were placed around the

table; her father's at the head. It had a forsaken air that was unendurable.

The dinner hour was now long past. It would be folly to attempt the meal. How could she and Isabel sit down alone and eat, and her father in prison, and her mother frantic with a loss which she was warned it was sinful to mourn over. Antonia had a soul made for extremities and not afraid to face them, but invisible hands controlled her. What could a woman do, whom society had forbidden to do anything, but endure the pangs of patience?

The Señora could offer no suggestions. She was not indeed in a mood to think of her resources. A spiritual dread was upon her. And with this mingled an intense sense of personal wrong from her husband. "Had she not begged him to be passive? And he had put an old rifle before her and her daughters! It was all that Señor Houston's doing. She had an assurance of that." She invoked a thousand maledictions on him. She recalled, with passionate reproaches, Jack's infidelity to her and his God and his country. Her anger passed from one subject to another constantly,

finding in all, even in the lukewarmness of Antonia and Isabel, and in their affection for lovers, who were also rebels, an accumulating reason for a stupendous reproach against herself, her husband, her children, and her unhappy fate. Her whole nature was in revolt—in that complete mental and moral anarchy from which springs tragedy and murder.

Isabel wept so violently that she angered still further the tearless suffering of her mother. "God and the saints!" she cried. "What are you weeping for? Will tears do any good? Do I weep? God has forbidden me to weep for the wicked. Yet how I suffer! Mary, mother of sorrows, pity me!"

She sent Isabel away. Her sobs were not to be borne. And very soon she felt Antonia's white face and silent companionship to be just as unendurable. She would be alone. Not even Rachela would she have near her. She put out all the lights but the taper above a large crucifix, and at its foot she sat down in tearless abandon, alone with her reproaches and her remorse.

Antonia watched with her mother, though shut out from her presence. She feared for a

state of mind so barren of affection, so unsoftened by tears. Besides, it was the climax of a condition which had continued ever since she had sent her boy away without a word of love. In the dim corridor outside she sat still, listening for any noise or movement which might demand help or sympathy. It was not nine o'clock; but the time lengthened itself out beyond endurance. Even yet she had hope of some word from her father. Surely, they would let him send some word to them!

She heard the murmur of voices downstairs, and she thought angrily of Rachela, and Molly, and Manuel, "making a little confidence together" over their trouble, and spicing their evening gossip with the strange thing that had happened to the Señor Doctor. She knew that Rachela and Manuel would call him heretic and Americano, and, by authority of these two words, accuse him of every crime.

Thinking with a swelling heart of these things, she heard the door open, and a step slowly and heavily ascend the stairs. Ere she had time to wonder at it, her father came in sight. There was a shocking change in his air and appearance, but as he was evidently going

to her mother's room, she shrank back and sat motionless so as not to attract his attention.

Then she went to the parlor, and had the fire renewed and food put upon the table. She was sure that he would need it, and she believed he would be glad to talk over with her the events of the afternoon.

The Señora was still sitting at the foot of the crucifix when her husband opened the door. She had not been able to pray; ave and paternoster alike had failed her. Her rebellious grief filled every corner of her heart. She understood that some one had entered the room, and she thought of Rachela; but she found a kind of comfort in the dull stupor of grief she was indulging, and she would not break its spell by lifting her head.

"Maria."

She rose up quickly and stood gazing at him.

She did not shriek or exclaim; her surprise controlled her. And also her terror; for his face was white as death, and had an expression of angry despair that terrified her.

"Roberto! Roberto! Mi Roberto! How you have tortured me! I have nearly died!

Fray Ignatius said you had been sent to prison."

She spoke as calmly as a frightened child; sad and hesitating. If he had taken her in his arms she would have sobbed her grief away there.

But Robert Worth was at that hour possessed by two master passions, tyrannical and insatiable—they would take notice of nothing that did not minister to them.

"Maria, they have taken my arms from me. Cowards! Cowards! Miserable cowards! I refused to give them up! They held my hands and robbed me—robbed me of my manhood and honor! I begged them to shoot me ere they did it, and they spoke courteously and regretted this, and hoped that, till I felt that it would be a joy to strangle them."

"Roberto! Mi Roberto! You have me!"

"I want my rifle and all it represents. I want myself back again. Maria, Maria, until then, I am not worthy to be any good woman's husband!"

"Roberto, dearest! It is not your fault."

"It is my fault. I have waited too long. My sons showed me my duty—my soul urged

me to do it. I deserve the shame, but I will wipe it out with crimson blood."

The Señora stood speechless, wringing her hands. Her own passion was puny beside the sternness, the reality, and the intensity of the quiet rage before her. She was completely mastered by it. She forgot all but the evident agony she could neither mistake nor console.

"I have come to say 'farewell,' Maria. We have been very happy together—Maria—our children—dearest—"

"Oh, Roberto! My husband! My soul! My life! Leave me not."

"I am going for my arms. I will take them a hundredfold from those who have robbed me. I swear I will!"

"You do not love me. What are these Americans to you? I am your wife. Your Maria—"

"These Americans are my brothers—my sons. My mother is an American woman."

"And I?"

"You are my wife—my dear wife! I love you—God Almighty knows how well I love you; but we must part now, at least for a short time. Maria, my dear one, I must go."

"Go? Where to?"

"I am going to join General Houston."

"I thought so. I knew it. The accursed one! Oh that I had him here again! I would bury my stiletto in his heart! Over the white hilt I would bury it! I would wash my hands in his blood, and think them blessed ever afterwards! Stay till daylight, Roberto. I have so much to say, dearest."

"I cannot. I have stayed too long. And now I must ride without a gun or knife to protect me. Any Indian that I meet can scalp me. Do you understand now what disarming means, Maria? If I had gone with my boy, with my brave Jack, I could at least have sold my life to its last drop."

"In the morning, Roberto, Lopez Navarro will get you a gun. Oh, if you must go, do not go unarmed! There are ten thousand Comanche between here and the Brazos."

"How could I look Lopez Navarro in the face? Or any other man? No, no! I must win back my arms, before I can walk the streets of San Antonio again."

He took her in his arms, he kissed her eyes, her cheeks, her lips, murmuring tender little

Spanish words that meant, oh, so much, to the wretched woman!—words she had taught him with kisses—words he never used but to her ears only.

She clung to his neck, to his hands, to his feet; she made his farewell an unspeakable agony. At last he laid her upon her couch, sobbing and shrieking like a child in an extremity of physical anguish. But he did not blame her. Her impetuosities, her unreasonable extravagances, were a part of her nature, her race, and her character. He did not expect a weak, excitable woman to become suddenly a creature of flame and steel.

But it was a wonderful rest to his exhausted body and soul to turn from her to Antonia. She led him quietly to his chair by the parlor fire. She gave him food and wine. She listened patiently, but with a living sympathy, to his wrong. She endorsed, with a clasp of his hand and a smile, his purpose. And she said, almost cheerfully:

"You have not given up all your arms, father. When I first heard of the edict, I hid in my own room the rifle, the powder and the shot, which were in your study. Paola has

knives in the stable; plenty of them. Get one from him."

Good news is a very relative thing. This information made the doctor feel as if all were now easy and possible. The words he said to her, Antonia never forgot. They sang in her heart like music, and led her on through many a difficult path. The conversation then turned upon money matters, and Antonia received the key of his study, and full directions as to the gold and papers secreted there.

Then Isabel was awakened, and the rifle brought down; and Paola saddled the fleetest horse in the stable, and after one solemn five minutes with his daughter, Robert Worth rode away into the midnight darkness, and into a chaos of public events of which no man living could forecast the outcome.

Rode away from wife and children and home; leaving behind him the love and labor of his lifetime—

> "The thousand sweet, still joys of such
> As hand in hand face earthly life."

For what? For justice, for freedom of thought and action, for the rights of his manhood, for

the brotherhood of race and religion and country. Antonia and Isabel stood hand in hand at the same lattice from which the Señora had watched her son away, and in a dim, uncertain manner these thoughts connected themselves in each mind with the same mournful inquiry—Is it worth while?

As the beat of the horse's hoofs died away, they turned. The night was cold but clear, and the sky appeared so high that their eyes throbbed as they gazed upward at the grand arch, sprinkled with suns and worlds. Suddenly into the tranquil spaces there was flung a sound of joy and revelry; and the girls stepped to a lattice at the end of the corridor and looked out.

The residencia of Don Salvo Valasco was clearly visible from this site. They saw that it was illuminated throughout. Lovely women, shining with jewels, and soldiers in scarlet and gold, were chatting through the graceful movements of the danza, or executing the more brilliant Jota Aragonesa. The misty beauty of white lace mantillas, the glitter and color of fans and festival dresses, made a moving picture of great beauty.

And as they watched it there was a cessation of the dance, followed by the rapid sweep of a powerful hand over the strings of a guitar. Then a group of officers stepped together, and a great wave of melodious song, solemn and triumphant, thrilled the night. It was the national hymn. Antonia and Isabel knew it. Every word beat upon their hearts. The power of association, the charm of a stately, fervent melody was upon them.

"It is Señor Higadillos who leads," whispered Isabel, as a resonant voice, powerful and sweet, cried—

"O list to the summons! The blood of our sires,
Boils high in our veins, and to vengeance inspires!
Who bows to the yoke? who bends to the blow?"

and, without a moment's hesitation, the answer came in a chorus of enthusiastic cadences—

"No hero will bend, no Mexican bow;
Our country in tears sends her sons to the fight,
To conquer, or die, for our land and our right."

"You see, the Mexicans think *they* are in the right—*they* are patriots also, Antonia."

The sorrowful girl spoke like a puzzled child, fretfully and uncertainly, and Antonia led her

silently away. What could she answer? And when she remembered the dear fugitive, riding alone through the midnight—riding now for life and liberty—she could not help the uprising again of that cold benumbing question—"Is it worth while?"

## CHAPTER VII.

### A MEETING AT MIDNIGHT.

"All faiths are to their own believers just,
For none believe because they will, but must;
The priest continues what the nurse began,
And thus the child imposes on the man."

—DRYDEN.

"—if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment, to which heaven has joined
Great issues good or bad for humankind,
Is happy as a lover; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired;
And through the heat of conflict keeps the law
In calmness made; and sees what he foresaw,
Or, if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need."

—WORDSWORTH.

"Ah! love, let us be true
To one another, through the world which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams!"

THE gathering at Don Valasco's was constantly repeated in various degrees of splendor among the loyal Mexicans of the city. They were as fully convinced of the justice of their cause as the Americans were.

"They had graciously permitted Americans to make homes in their country; now they wanted not only to build heretic churches and sell heretic bibles, but also to govern Texas after their own fashion." From a Mexican point of view the American settlers were a godless, atheistical, quarrelsome set of ingrates. For eaten bread is soon forgotten, and Mexicans disliked to remember that their own independence had been won by the aid of the very men they were now trying to force into subjection.

The two parties were already in array in every house in the city. The Señora at variance with her daughters, their Irish cook quarrelling with their Mexican servants, only represented a state of things nearly universal. And after the failure of the Mexicans at Gonzales to disarm the Americans, the animosity constantly increased.

In every church, the priests—more bitter, fierce and revengeful than either the civil or military power—urged on the people an exterminating war. A black flag waved from the Missions, and fired every heart with an unrelenting vengeance and hatred. To slay a heretic was a free pass through the dolorous pains of pur-

gatory. For the priesthood foresaw that the triumph of the American element meant the triumph of freedom of conscience, and the abolition of their own despotism. To them the struggle was one involving all the privileges of their order; and they urged on the fight with passionate denunciations of the foe, and with magnificent promises of spiritual favors and blessings. In the fortress, the plaza, the houses, the churches, the streets, their fiery words kept society in a ferment.

But through all this turmoil the small duties of life went on. Soldiers were parading the streets, and keeping watch on the flat roofs of the houses; men were solemly swearing allegiance to Santa Anna, or flying by night to the camp of the Americans; life and death were held at a pin's fee; but eating and dressing, dancing and flirting, were pursued with an eagerness typical of pleasure caught in the passing.

And every hour these elements gathered intensity. The always restless populace of San Antonio was at a feverish point of impatience. They wanted the war at their own doors. They wanted the quarrel fought out

on their own streets. Business took a secondary place. Men fingered weapons and dreamed of blood, until the temper of the town was as boisterous and vehement as the temper of the amphitheatre when impatiently waiting for the bulls and the matadores.

Nor was it possible for Antonia to lock the door upon this pervading spirit. After Doctor Worth's flight, it became necessary for her to assume control over the household. She had promised him to do so, and she was resolved, in spite of all opposition, to follow out his instructions. But it was by no means an easy task.

Fray Ignatius had both the Señora and Rachela completely under his subjection. Molly, the Irish cook, was already dissatisfied. The doctor had saved her life and given her a good home and generous wages, and while the doctor was happy and prosperous Molly was accordingly grateful. But a few words from the priest set affairs in a far pleasanter light to her. She was a true Catholic; the saints sent the heretic doctor to help. It was therefore the saints to whom gratitude was due. Had she not earned her good wage? And would not

Don Angel Sandoval give her a still larger sum? Or even the Brothers at the Mission of San José? Molly listened to these words with a complacent pleasure. She reflected that it would be much more agreeable to her to be where she could entirely forget that she had ever been hungry and friendless, and lying at death's door.

Antonia knew also that Rachela was at heart unfaithful, and soon the conviction was forced on her that servants are never faithful beyond the line of their own interest—that it is, indeed, against certain primary laws of nature to expect it. Certainly, it was impossible to doubt that there was in all their dependents a kind of satisfaction in their misfortunes.

The doctor had done them favors—how unpleasant was their memory! The Señora had offended them by the splendor of her dress, and her complacent air of happiness. Antonia's American ways and her habit of sitting for hours with a book in her hand were a great irritation.

"She wishes to be thought wiser than other women—as wise as even a holy priest—*she!* that never goes to mass, and is nearly a heretic."

said the house steward ; and as for the Señorita Isabel, a little trouble will be good for her! Holy Mary! the way she has been pampered and petted! It is an absurdity. 'Little dear,' and 'angel,' are the hardest words she hears. *Si!* if God did not mercifully abate a little the rich they would grow to be 'almightys.'"

This was the tone of the conversation of the servants of the household. It was not an unnatural tone, but it was a very unhappy one. People cannot escape from the mood of mind they habitually indulge, and from the animus of the words they habitually use ; and Antonia felt and understood the antagonistic atmosphere. For the things which we know best of all are precisely the things which no one has ever told us.

The Señora, in a plain black serge gown, and black rebozo over her head, spent her time in prayers and penances. The care of her household had always been delegated to her steward, and to Rachela ; while the duties that more especially belonged to her, had been fulfilled by her husband and by Antonia. In many respects she was but a grown-up baby. And so, in this great extremity, the only duty

which pressed upon her was the idea of supplicating the saints to take charge of her unhappy affairs.

And Fray Ignatius was daily more hard with her. Antonia even suspected from his growing intolerance and bitterness, that the Americans were gaining unexpected advantages. But she knew nothing of what was happening. She could hear from afar off the marching and movements of soldiers; the blare of military music; the faint echoes of hurrahing multitudes; but there was no one to give her any certain information. Still, she guessed something from the anger of the priest and the reticence of the Mexican servants. If good fortune had been with Santa Anna, she was sure she would have heard of "The glorious! The invincible! The magnificent Presidente de la Republica Mexicana! The Napoleon of the West!"

It was not permitted her to go into the city. A proposal to do so had been met with a storm of angry amazement. And steam and electricity had not then annihilated distance and abolished suspense. She could but wonder and hope, and try to read the truth from a

covert inspection of the face and words of Fray Ignatius.

Between this monk and herself the breach was hourly widening. With angry pain she saw her mother tortured between the fact that she loved her husband, and the horrible doubt that to love him was a mortal sin. She understood the underlying motive which prompted the priest to urge upon the Señora the removal of herself and her daughters to the convent. His offer to take charge of the Worth residencia and estate was in her conviction a proposal to rob them of all rights in it. She felt certain that whatever the Church once grasped in its iron hand, it would ever retain. And both to Isabel and herself the thought of a convent was now horrible. "They will force me to be a nun," said Isabel; "and then, what will Luis do? And they will never tell me anything about my father and my brothers. I should never hear of them. I should never see them any more; unless the good God was so kind as to let me meet them in his heaven."

And Antonia had still darker and more fearful thoughts. She had not forgotten the stories whispered to her childhood, of dreadful

fates reserved for contumacious and disobedient women. Whenever Fray Ignatius looked at her she felt as if she were within the shadow of the Inquisition.

Never had days passed so wearily and anxiously. Never had nights been so terrible. The sisters did not dare to talk much together; they doubted Rachela; they were sure their words were listened to and repeated. They were not permitted to be alone with the Señora. Fray Ignatius had particularly warned Rachela to prevent this. He was gradually bringing the unhappy woman into what he called "a heavenly mind"—the influence of her daughters, he was sure, would be that of worldly affections and sinful liberty. And Rachela obeyed the confessor so faithfully, that the Señora was almost in a state of solitary confinement. Every day her will was growing weaker, her pathetic obedience more child-like and absolute.

But at midnight, when every one was asleep, Antonia stepped softly into her sister's room and talked to her. They sat in Isabel's bed clasping each other's hand in the dark, and speaking in whispers. Then Antonia warned

and strengthened Isabel. She told her all her fears. She persuaded her to control her wilfulness, to be obedient, and to assume the childlike thoughtlessness which best satisfied Fray Ignatius. "He told you to-day to be happy, that he would think for you. My darling, let him believe that is the thing you want," said Antonia. "I assure you we shall be the safer for it."

"He said to me yesterday, when I asked him about the war, 'Do not inquire, child, into things you do not understand. That is to be irreligious,' and then he made the cross on his breast, as if I had put a bad thought into his heart. We are afraid all day, and we sit whispering all night about our fears; that is the state we are in. The Lord sends us nothing but misfortunes, Antonia."

"My darling, tell the Lord your sorrow, then, but do not repine to Rachela or Fray Ignatius. That is to complain to the merciless of the All-Merciful."

"Do you think I am wicked, Antonia? What excuse could I offer to His Divine Majesty, if I spoke evil to him of Rachela and Fray Ignatius?"

"Neither of them are our friends; do you think so?"

"Fray Ignatius looks like a goblin; he gives me a shiver when he looks at me; and as for Rachela—I already hate her!"

"Do not trust her. You need not hate her, Isabel."

"Antonia, I know that I shall eternally hate her; for I am sure that our angels are at variance."

In conversations like these the anxious girls passed the long, and often very cold, nights. The days were still worse, for as November went slowly away the circumstances which surrounded their lives appeared to constantly gather a more decided and a bitterer tone. December, that had always been such a month of happiness, bright with Christmas expectations and Christmas joys, came in with a terribly severe, wet norther. The great log fires only warmed the atmosphere immediately surrounding them, and Isabel and Antonia sat gloomily within it all day. It seemed to Antonia as if her heart had come to the very end of hope; and that something must happen.

The rain lashed the earth; the wind roared around the house, and filled it with unusual noises. The cold was a torture that few found themselves able to endure. But it brought a compensation. Fray Ignatius did not leave the Mission comforts; and Rachela could not bear to go prowling about the corridors and passages. She established herself in the Señora's room, and remained there. And very early in the evening she said "she had an outrageous headache," and went to her room.

Then Antonia and Isabel sat awhile by their mother's bed. They talked in whispers of their father and brothers, and when the Señora cried, they kissed her sobs into silence and wiped her tears away. In that hour, if Fray Ignatius had known it, they undid, in a great measure, the work to which he had given more than a month of patient and deeply-reflective labor. For with the girls, there was the wondrous charm of love and nature; but with the priest, only a splendid ideal of a Church universal that was to swallow up all the claims of love and all the ties of nature.

It was nearly nine o'clock when Antonia and Isabel returned to the parlor fire. Their hearts

were full of sorrow for their mother, and of fears for their own future. For this confidence had shown them how firmly the refuge of the convent had been planted in the anxious ideas of the Señora. Fortunately, the cold had driven the servants either to the kitchen fire or to their beds, and they could talk over the subject without fear of interference.

"Are you sleepy, queridita?"—(little dear).

"I think I shall never go to sleep again, Antonia. If I shut my eyes I shall find myself in the convent; and I do not want to go there even in a dream. Do you know Mother Teresa? Well then, I could tell you things. And she does not like me, I am sure of that; quite sure."

"My darling, I am going to make us a cup of tea. It will do us good."

"If indeed it were chocolate!"

"I cannot make chocolate now; but you shall have a great deal of sugar in your cup, and something good to eat also. There, my darling, put your chair close to the fire, and we will sit here until we are quite sleepy."

With the words she went into the kitchen. Molly was nodding over her beads, in the com-

fortable radius made by the blazing logs; no one else was present but a young peon. He brought a small kettle to the parlor fire, and lifted a table to the hearth, and then replenished the pile of logs for burning during the night. Isabel, cuddling in a large chair, watched Antonia, as she went softly about putting on the table such delicacies as she could find at that hour. Tamales and cold duck, sweet cake and the guava jelly that was Isabel's favorite dainty. There was a little comfort in the sight of these things; and also, in the bright silver teapot standing so cheerfully on the hearth, and diffusing through the room a warm perfume, at once soothing and exhilarating.

"I really think I shall like that American tea to-night, Antonia, but you must half fill my cup with those little blocks of sugar—quite half fill it, Antonia; and have you found cream, my dear one? Then a great deal of cream."

Antonia stood still a moment and looked at the drowsy little beauty. Her eyes were closed, and her head nestled comfortably in a corner of the padded chair. Then a hand upon the door-handle arrested her attention, and Antonia turned her eyes from Isabel and

watched it. Ortiz, the peon, put his head within the room, and then disappeared; but oh, wonder and joy! Don Luis entered swiftly after him; and before any one could say a word, he was kneeling by Isabel kissing her hand and mingling his exclamations of rapture with hers.

Antonia looked with amazement and delight at this apparition. How had he come? She put her hand upon his sleeve; it was scarcely wet. His dress was splendid; if he had been going to a tertullia of the highest class, he could not have been more richly adorned. And the storm was yet raging! It was a miracle.

"Dear Luis, sit down! Here is a chair close to Iza! Tell her your secrets a few minutes, and I will go for mi madre. O yes! She will come! You shall see, Iza! And then, Luis, we shall have some supper."

"You see that I am in heaven already, Antonia; though, indeed, I am also hungry and thirsty, my sister."

Antonia was not a minute in reaching her mother's room. The unhappy lady was half-lying among the large pillows of her gilded

bed, wide awake. Her black eyes were fixed upon a crucifix at its foot, and she was slowly murmuring prayers upon her rosary.

"Madre! Madre! Luis is here, Luis is here! Come quick, mi madre. Here are your stockings and slippers, and your gown, and your mantilla—no, no, no, do not call Rachela. Luis has news of my father, and of Jack! Oh, madre, he has a letter from Jack to you! Come dear, come, in a few minutes you will be ready."

She was urging and kissing the trembling woman, and dressing her in despite of her faint effort to delay—to call Rachela—to bring Luis to her room. In ten minutes she was ready. She went down softly, like a frightened child, Antonia cheering and encouraging her in whispers.

When she entered the cheerful parlor the shadow of a smile flitted over her wan face. Luis ran to meet her. He drew the couch close to the hearth; he helped Antonia arrange her comfortably upon it. He made her tea, and kissed her hands when he put it into them. And then Isabel made Luis a cup, and cut his tamales, and waited upon him with such

pretty service, that the happy lover thought he was eating a meal in Paradise.

For a few minutes it had been only this ordinary gladness of reunion; but it was impossible to ignore longer the anxiety in the eyes that asked him so many questions. He took two letters from his pockets and gave them to the Señora. They were from her husband and Jack. Her hands trembled; she kissed them fervently; and as she placed them in her breast her tears dropped down upon them.

Antonia opened the real conversation with that never-failing wedge, the weather. "You came through the storm, Luis? Yet you are not wet, scarcely? Now then, explain this miracle."

"I went first to Lopez Navarro's. Do you not know this festa dress? It is the one Lopez bought for the feast of St. James. He lent it to me, for I assure you that my own clothing was like that of a beggar man. It was impossible that I could see my angel on earth in it."

"But in such weather? You can not have come far to-day?"

"Señorita, there are things which are impossible, quite impossible! That is one of them. Early this morning the north wind advanced upon us, sword in hand. It will last fifty hours, and we shall know something more about it before they are over. Very well, but it was also absolutely necessary that some one should reach San Antonio to-night; and I was so happy as to persuade General Burleson to send me. The Holy Lady has given me my reward."

"Have you seen the Señor Doctor lately, Luis," asked the Señora.

"I left him at nightfall."

"At nightfall! But that is impossible!"

"It is true. The army of the Americans is but a few miles from San Antonio."

"Grace of God! Luis!"

"As you say, Señora. It is the grace of God. Did you not know?"

"We know nothing but what Fray Ignatius tells us—that the Americans have been everywhere pulling down churches, and granting martyrdom to the priests, and that everywhere miraculous retributions have pursued them."

"Was Gonzales a retribution? The Señor Doctor came to us while we were there. God be blessed; but he startled us like the rattle of rifle-shots in the midnight! 'Why were you not at Goliad?' he cried. 'There were three hundred stand of arms there, and cannon, and plenty of provisions. Why were they not yours?' You would have thought, Señora, he had been a soldier all his life. The men canght fire when he came near them, and we went to Goliad like eagles flying for their prey. We took the town, and the garrison, and all the arms and military stores. I will tell you something that came to pass there. At midnight, as I and Jack stood with the Señor Doctor by the camp-fire, a stranger rode up to us. It was Colonel Milam. He was flying from a Mexican prison and had not heard of the revolt of the Americans. He made the camp ring with his shout of delight. He was impatient for the morning. He was the first man that entered the garrison. Bravissimo! What a soldier is he!"

"I remember! I remember!" cried the Señora. "Mi Roberto brought him here once. So splendid a man I never saw before. So tall,

so handsome, so gallant, so like a hero. He is an American from—well, then, I have forgotten the place."

"From Kentucky. He fought with the Mexicans when they were fighting for their liberty; but when they wanted a king and a dictator he resigned his commision and was thrown into prison. He has a long bill against Santa Anna."

"We must not forget, Luis," said the Señora with a little flash of her old temper, "that Santa Anna represents to good Catholics the triumph of Holy Church."

Luis devoutly crossed himself. "I am her dutiful son, I assure you, Señora—always."

A warning glance from Antonia changed the conversation. There was plenty to tell which touched them mainly on the side of the family, and the Señora listened, with pride which she could not conceal, to the exploits of her husband and sons, though she did not permit herself to confess the feeling. And her heart softened to her children. Without acknowledging the tie between Isabel and Luis, she permitted or was oblivious to the favors it allowed.

Certainly many little formalities could be dispensed with, in a meeting so unexpected and so eventful. When the pleasant impromptu meal was over, even the Señora had eaten and drunk with enjoyment. Then Luis set the table behind them, and they drew closer to the fire, Luis holding Isabel's hand, and Antonia her mother's. The Señora took a cigarette from Luis, and Isabel sometimes put that of Luis between her rosy lips. At the dark, cold midnight they found an hour or two of sweetest consolation. It was indeed hard to weary these three heart-starved women; they asked question after question, and when any brought out the comical side of camp life they forget their pleasure was almost a clandestine one, and laughed outright.

In the very midst of such a laugh, Rachela entered the room. She stood in speechless amazement, gazing with a dark, malicious face upon the happy group. "Señorita Isabel!" she screamed; "but this is abominable! At the midnight also! Who could have believed in such wickedness? Grace of Mary, it is inconceivable!"

She laid her hand roughly on Isabel's shoul-

der, and Luis removed it with as little courtesy. "You were not called," he said, with the haughty insolence of a Mexican noble to a servant—"Depart."

"My Señora! Listen! You yourself also—you will die. You that are really weak—so broken-hearted—"

Then a miracle occurred. The Señora threw off the nightmare of selfish sorrow and spiritual sentimentality which had held her in bondage. She took the cigarito from her lips with a scornful air, and repeated the words of Luis:

"You were not called. Depart."

"The Señorita Isabel?"

"Is in my care. Her mother's care! do you understand?"

"My Señora, Fray Ignatius—"

"Saints in heaven! But this is intolerable! Go."

Then Rachela closed the door with a clang which echoed through the house. And say as we will, the malice of the wicked is never quite futile. It was impossible after this interruption to recall the happy spirit dismissed by it; and Rachela had the consolation, as she mut-

tered beside the fire in the Señora's room, this conviction. So that when she heard the party breaking up half an hour afterwards, she complimented herself upon her influence.

"Will Jack come and see me soon, and the Señor Doctor?" questioned the Señora, anxiously, as she held the hand of Luis in parting.

"Jack is on a secret message to General Houston. His return advices will find us, I trust, in San Antonio. But until we have taken the city, no American can safely enter it. For this reason, when it was necessary to give Lopez Navarro certain instructions, I volunteered to bring them. By the Virgin of Guadalupe! I have had my reward," he said, lifting the Señora's hand and kissing it.

"But, then, even you are in danger."

"Si! If I am discovered; but, blessed be the hand of God! Luis Alveda knows where he is going, and how to get there."

"I have heard," said the Señora in a hushed voice, "that there are to be no prisoners. That is Santa Anna's order."

"I heard it twenty days ago, and am still suffocating over it."

"Ah, Luis, you do not know the man yet! I heard Fray Ignatius say that."

"We know him well; and also what he is capable of"; and Luis plucked his mustache fiercely, as he bowed a silent farewell to the ladies.

"Holy Maria! How brave he is!" said Isabel, with a flash of pride that conquered her desire to weep. "How brave he is! Certainly, if he meets Santa Anna, he will kill him."

They went very quietly up-stairs. The Señora was anticipating the interview she expected with Rachela, and, perhaps wisely, she isolated herself in an atmosphere of sullen and haughty silence. She would accept nothing from her, not even sympathy or flattery; and, in a curt dismission, managed to make her feel the immeasurable distance between a high-born lady of the house of Flores, and a poor *manola* that she had taken from the streets of Madrid. Rachela knew the Señora was thinking of this circumstance; the thought was in her voice, and it cowed and snubbed the woman, her nature being essentially as low as her birth.

As for the Señora, the experience did her a world of good. She waited upon herself as a princess might condescend to minister to her

own wants—loftily, with a smile at her own complaisance. The very knowledge that her husband was near at hand inspired her with courage. She went to sleep assuring herself "that not even Fray Ignatius should again speak evil of her beloved, who never thought of her except with a loyal affection." For in married life, the wife can sin against love as well as fidelity; and she thought with a sob of the cowardice which had permitted Fray Ignatius to call her dear one "rebel and heretic."

"Santa Dios!" she said in a passionate whisper; "it is not a mortal sin to think differently from Santa Anna"—and then more tenderly—"those who love each other are of the same faith."

And if Fray Ignatius had seen at that moment the savage whiteness of her small teeth behind the petulant pout of her parted lips, he might have understood that this woman of small intelligence had also the unreasoning partisanship and the implacable sense of anger which generally accompanies small intelligence, and which indicates a nature governed by feeling, and utterly irresponsive to reasoning which feeling does not endorse.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MOTHER AND PRIEST.

. . . . "witness,
When the dark-stoled priestly crew,
Came swift trooping where the trumpet
Of foul Santa Anna blew."

* * * * * *

"Rouse thee, Wrath, and be a giant;
People's Will, that hath been pliant,
Long, too long;

Up, and snap the rusty chaining,
Brittle bond for thy restraining,
Know the hour, the weak are reigning
Thou art strong.

* * * * * *

"Rise and right the wrongs of ages;
Balance Time's unequal pages
With the sword."

IT was nearly two o'clock when Don Luis mounted his horse and left the Worth residencia. The storm still raged, the night was dark, the cold intense, but the home of Lopez Navarro was scarce a quarter of a mile away; and he found him waiting his return.

"You have still an hour, Luis. Come in and sit with me."

"As you say; and I wish to show you that I am capable of a great thing. You do not believe me? Well, then give me again my own clothes. I will resign these."

"You are most welcome to them, Luis."

"But no; I am in earnest. The fight is at hand—they are too fine."

"Yes, but I will tell you—I can say anything to you—there is to be a grand day for freedom; well, then, for a festa one puts on the best that is to be got. I will even lend you my Cross of Saint James, if you wish. A young hero should be dressed like a hero. Honor my poor clothes so far as to wear them in the fight."

"Thank you, Lopez. I will not disgrace them"; and he bent forward and looked into his friend's eyes. His glance prolonged his words—went further than speech—went where speech could not reach.

"Listen to me, Luis. As a matter of precision, where now are the Americans?"

"At the mission of Espada."

"La Espada?—the sword—the name is ominous."

"Of success, Lopez."

"Is Houston, then, with you?"

"Until a few days ago. He and General Austin have gone to San Felipe."

"For what? Is not San Antonio the most important point?"

"It was decided by the vote of the army to send them there to frame a provisional government. There are plenty of fighters with us, but not one statesman but Houston. And now it is necessary that we should have legal authority to obtain loans, maintain the army in the field, and many other such things vital to our cause. Austin is to go to the United States. He will bring back men and money. Houston must draw up our declaration and manifestoes; direct the civil government; forward troops; and, in fact, set a new government in motion."

"He is the loadstone in the bosom!* I wonder that the Americans permitted that he should leave them."

"He, and he only, was the man to go. Ere he left, he said some strange words. I shall not, as a Mexican, forget them. In the midst

* The loadstone in the bosom is a charm against evil; the bringer of good fortune.

of the men he stood like a god, with his great stature, and his bright, strong face. One cannot think of him as of a common mortal. Indeed, I will confess that I could only compare him with the Efreet in the Arabian tale, 'whose nostrils were like trumpets, his eyes like lamps, and who had dishevelled, dust-colored hair '"

"But, to proceed; what were the strange words?"

"Thus he spoke, and his voice rang out like a clarion:

"'You will fight as men fight for their homes, and their wives, and their children, but also—remember this—the idea of Texas is in the American heart! Two generations they have carried it there! It is your destiny to make the idea a fact! As far back as eighteen nineteen, Adams wanted Texas. When Adams became president, he told Poinsett to offer Mexico a million of dollars for Texas. Clay would have voted three millions. Van Buren, in eighteen twenty-nine, told Poinsett to offer five millions for Texas. I went to Washington that year, and proposed to revolutionize Texas. I declare to you that the highest

men in the land were of my mind. Only last July President Jackson offered an additional half million dollars for the Rio Grande boundary; and Mr. Secretary Forsyth said, justly or unjustly, by hook, or by crook, Texas must become part of our country. We have been longing for it for fifty years! Now, then, brothers-in-arms!' he cried, 'You are here for your homes and your freedom; but, more than that, you are here for your country! Remember the thousands of Americans who have slipped out of history and out of memory, who have bought this land with their blood! We have held a grip on Texas for fifty years. By the soul of every American who has perished here, I charge you, No Surrender!'

"You should have heard the shout that answered the charge. Jesu, Maria! It made my heart leap to my bosom. And ever since, the two words have filled the air. You could see men catching them on their lips. They are in their eyes, and their walk. Their hands say them. The up-toss of their heads says them. When they go into battle they will see Houston in front of them, and hear him call back 'No surrender!' Mexico cannot hold Texas against

such a determined purpose, carried out by such determined men."

Lopez did not answer. He was a melancholy, well-read man, who had travelled, and to whom the idea of liberty was a passion. But the feeling of race was also strong in him, and he could not help regretting that liberty must come to Texas through an alien people—"heretics, too"—he muttered, carrying the thought out aloud. It brought others equally living to him, and he asked, "Where, then, is Doctor Worth?"

"At Espada. The army wished him to go to San Felipe with Houston, but he declined. And we want him most of all, both as a fighter and a physician. His son Thomas went in his place."

"I know not Thomas."

"Indeed, very few know him. He is one that seldom speaks. But his rifle has its word always ready."

"And Jack?"

"Jack also went to San Felipe. He is to bring back the first despatches. Jack is the darling of the camp. Ah, what a happy soul he has! One would think that it had just come from heaven, or was just going there."

"Did you see Señorita Antonia to-night?"

"Si! She is a blessing to the eyesight. So brave a young girl, so sweet, so wise; she is a miracle! If I loved not Isabel with my whole soul, I would kneel at Antonia's feet."

"That is where I also would kneel."

"Hark! how the wind roars, and how the rain thrashes the house! But our men have the shelter of one of the Panchos. You should have heard the padre threaten them with the anger of heaven and hell and General Cos. Good-bye, Lopez. I have stayed my last moment now."

"Your horse has been well fed. Listen, he is neighing for you; to Doctor Worth give my honorable regards. Is Señor Parades with you? and Perez Mexia? Say to them I keep the vow I made in their behalf. Farewell, Luis!" and Luis, who had been mounting as his friend talked, stooped from his saddle and kissed him.

It was just dawn when he reached camp, and he found Doctor Worth waiting his arrival. Fortunately there was nothing but good news for the doctor. Luis had seen everything through the medium of his own happiness, and

he described the midnight meal and the Señora's amiability with the utmost freedom from anything unpleasant. Rachela's interference he treated with scornful indifference; and yet it affected Worth's mind unpleasantly. For it went straight to the source of offence. "She must have had Fray Ignatius behind her. And my poor Maria, she will be as dough for them to knead as they desire to!"

And, in fact, as he was thus thinking, the Señora was lying awake in her bed, anticipating her confessor's next visit. She was almost glad the norther was still blowing. It would give her another day's respite; and "so many things happen as the clock goes round," she reflected. Perhaps even her Roberto might arrive; it would not be more wonderful than the visit of Luis Alveda.

But very early in the day she saw the father hurrying up the oleander avenue. The wind tossed his gown, and blew his hat backward and sideways, and compelled him to make undignified haste. And such little things affect the mental poise and mood! The Señora smiled at the funny figure he made; and with the smile came a feeling of resistance to his

tyranny, and a stubborn determination to defend her own conduct.

He came into her room with a doleful countenance, saying, as he crossed himself, "God be here!"

"And with you, father," answered the Señora, cheerfully—a mood she had assumed at the last moment, by a kind of instinct.

"There is evil news on every hand my daughter. The heretics are swarming like wolves around the Missions. Several of our holy brothers have endured the last extremity. These wolves will even enter the city, and you will be in danger. I have come to take you to the convent. There, Holy Mary will be your safety."

"But these wolves might attack the convent, father!"

"Our Blessed Lady is stronger than they. She has always kept her own."

"Blessed be the hand of God and Mary! I will trust in them. Ah, Antonia! Listen to Fray Ignatius! He says we must go to the convent—the heretics are coming. They have even slain some priests at the Mission."

"Fray Ignatius has been misinformed, dear

mother. When a man wears a gown and has no arms Americans do not molest him. That is certain. As for the convent it is impossible. My father forbade it. If the Americans enter the city, he is with them. He will protect us, if we should need it, which is not likely."

"Disobedient one!"

"Pardon. I wish only to obey the commands of my father."

"I absolve you from them."

"They are between God and my soul. There is no absolution from duty."

"Grace of God! Hear you, Señora! Hear you the rebellious and disobedient one! She has defied me to my face! She is near to being anathema! She is not your daughter! She is bewitched. Some evil spirit has possession of her. Let no one touch her or speak to her; it shall be a mortal sin."

Antonia fell at her mother's knee. "Mi madre! I am your daughter, your Antonia, that you carried in your breast, and that loves you better than life. Permit me not to be accused of sin—to be called a devil. Mother, speak for me."

At this moment Isabel entered. Seeing the

distress of her mother and sister she hastened to them; but Fray Ignatius stepped between, and extending his arms forbade her nearer approach.

"I forbid you to speak to your sister. I forbid you to touch her, to give her food, or water, or sympathy, until she has humbled herself, and obtained the forgiveness of her sin."

Then mother love stood up triumphant over superstition. "I and my daughter are the same," said the Señora, and she gave her hand to Antonia. "If she has sinned, we will bear the penance together; she and I together."

"I command you to stand apart. For the good of Antonia's sinful soul, I command you to withdraw yourself from her."

"She is my daughter, father. I will bear the sin and the punishment with her. The Holy Mother will understand me. To her I will go."

The door of her room was at hand; she stepped swiftly to it, and putting her daughters before her, passed in and turned the key.

The movement took the priest by surprise, and yet he was secretly satisfied with it. He had permitted himself to act with an impru-

dence most unusual. He had allowed the Señora to find out her own moral strength, and made a situation for her in which she had acted not only without his support, but against his authority.

"And yet," he muttered, "so much depends upon my persuading her into the convent; however, nothing now is to be done to-day, except to see Rachela. Saint Joseph! if these American heretics were only in my power! What a long joy I would make of them! I would cut a throat—just one throat—every day of my life."

The hatred which could contemplate a vengeance so long drawn out was on his dark face; yet, it is but justice to say, that he sincerely believed it to be a holy hatred. The foes of the church, he regarded as the foes of God; and his anger as a just zeal for the honor of the Lord of Hosts. Beside which, it included a far more tangible cause.

The accumulated treasures of the Missions; their gold and gems, their costly vestments and holy vessels, had been removed to the convent for safety. "These infidels of Americans give to women the honor they should give to God and Holy Church," he said to his

brethren. "They will not suffer the Sisters to be molested; and our wealth will be safe wherever they are."

But this wealth was really so immense, that he believed it might be well to secure it still further, and knowing the position Dr. Worth held among his countrymen, he resolved to induce his wife and daughters to seek refuge within the convent. They were, in fact, to be held as hostages, for the protection of the property of the Church.

That he should fail in his plan was intolerable to him. He had been so confident of success. He imagined the smile on the face of Fray Sarapiam, and the warning against self-confidence he would receive from his superior; and he vowed by Saint Joseph that he would not suffer himself to be so mortified by three women.

Had he seen the Señora after the first excitement of her rebellion was over, he would have been satisfied of the validity of his authority, at least as regarded her. She flung herself at the foot of her altar, weeping and beating her breast in a passion of self-accusation and contrition. Certainly, she had stood

by her daughter in the presence of the priest; but in her room she withdrew herself from the poor girl as if she were a spiritual leper.

Antonia at a distance watched the self-abasement of her mother. She could not weep, but she was white as clay, and her heart was swollen with a sense of wrong and injustice, until breathing was almost suffocation. She looked with a piteous entreaty at Isabel. Her little sister had taken a seat at the extremity of the room away from her. She watched Antonia with eyes full of terror. But there was no sympathy in her face, only an uncertainty which seemed to speak to her—to touch her—and her mother was broken-hearted with shame and grief.

The anxiety was also a dumb one. Until the Señora rose from her knees, there was not a movement made, not a word uttered. The girls waited shivering with cold, sick with fear, until she spoke. Even then her words were cold as the wind outside:

"Go to your room, Antonia. You have not only sinned; you have made me sin also. Alas! Alas! Miserable mother! Holy Maria! pray for me."

"Mi madre, I am innocent of wrong. I have committed no sin. Is it a sin to obey my father? Isabel, darling, speak for me."

"But, then, what have you done, Antonia?"

"Fray Ignatius wants us to go to the convent. I refused. My father made me promise to do so. Is not our first duty to our father? Mother, is it not?

"No, no; to God—and to Fray Ignatius, as the priest of God. He says we ought to go to the convent. He knows best. We have been disobedient and wicked."

"Isabel, speak, my dear one. Tell mi madre if you think we should go."

There was a moment's wavering, and then Isabel went to her mother and caressed her as only Isabel could caress her, and with the kisses, she said boldly: "Mi madre, we will not go to the convent. Not any of us. It is a dreadful place, even for a happy child. Oh, how cold and still are the Sisters! They are like stone figures that move about."

"Hush, child! I cannot listen to you! Go away! I must be alone. I must think. I must pray. Only the Mother of Sorrows can help me."

It was a miserable sequence to the happy night, and Antonia was really terrified at the position in which she found herself. If the Americans should fall, nothing but flight, or uncompromising submission to Fray Ignatius, remained for her. She knew only too well how miserable her life could be made; what moral torture could be inflicted; what spiritual servitude exacted. In a moment of time she had comprehended her danger, and her heart sank and sickened with a genuine physical terror.

The cold was still severe, and no one answered her call for wood. Isabel crouched, white and shivering, over the dying embers, and it was she who first uttered the fear Antonia had refused to admit to herself—"Suppose the servants are forbidden to wait upon us!"

"I will bring wood myself, dearest." She was greatly comforted by the word "us." She could almost have wept for joy of the sympathy it included. For thought is rapid in such crucial moments, and she had decided that even flight with her would be a kinder fate for Isabel, than the cruel tender mercies of the Sisters and the convent.

They could not talk much. The thought of their mother's anguish, and of the separation put between them and their household, shocked and terrified them. Vainly they called for fuel. At dinner time no table was laid, and no preparations made for the meal. Then Antonia went into the kitchen. She took with her food, and cooked it. She brought wood into the parlor, and made up the fire. Fortunately, her northern education had given her plenty of resources for such emergencies. Two or three savory dishes were soon ready, and the small table set upon a warm, bright hearth.

The Señora had evidently not been included in the ban, for Rachela attended with ostentatious care to her comfort; but Isabel had rolled herself up in a wadded silk coverlet and gone to sleep. Antonia awakened her with a kiss. "Come, queridita, and get your dinner."

"But is it possible? I thought Fray Ignatius had forbidden it."

"He cannot forbid me to wait upon you, my darling one. And he cannot turn the flour into dust, and the meat into stone. There is a good dinner ready; and you are hungry, no doubt."

"For three hours I have been faint. Ah! you have made me a custard also! You are a very comforter."

But the girl was still and sad, and Antonia was hard pressed to find any real comfort for her. For she knew that their only hope lay in the immediate attack of the American force, and its success; and she did not think it wise to hide from her sister the alternatives that lay before them if the Americans failed.

"I am afraid," said Isabel; "and so unhappy. A very sad business is life. I cannot think how any one can care to live."

"Remember Luis, and our father, and Jack, and Thomas, and our dear mother, who this morning stood between us and Fray Ignatius. Will you let this priest turn the sky black above you?"

"And also, men will fight. What for? Who can tell? The Americans want so much of everything. Naturally they do not get all they want. What do they do? Fight, and get killed. Then they go into the next world, and complain of people. As for Luis, I do not expect to see him again."

Fortunately, the norther moderated at

sunset. Life then seemed so much more possible. Adverse elements intensify adverse fortune, and the physical suffering from the cold had also benumbed Antonia's spirits, and made her less hopeful and less clear-visioned. But when she awoke at the gray dawn of the next day, she awoke with a different spirit. She had regained herself. She rose quietly, and looked out towards the city. The black flag from the Alamo and the Missions hung above it. She looked at the ominous standards, and then the tears sprang to her eyes; she lifted her face and her hands to heaven, and a few words, swifter than light, sprang from her soul into the ear of the Eternal Father of Spirits.

The answer came with the petition—came with the crack of rifle-shots; precise, regular, unceasing.

"Oh God! I thank Thee! Lord of Hosts, Thou art a great multitude! Isabel! Isabel! The Americans are attacking the city! Our father will fight his way back to his home! Fray Ignatius can not come to-day. Oh, I am so happy! So happy! Listen! How the Mexicans are shouting! They are cheering on the men! What a turmoil!"

"Jesu, Maria, have mercy!" cried Isabel, clasping her crucifix and falling upon her knees.

"Oh, Isabel, pray for our father, that his angel may overshadow him with strong wings."

"And Luis?"

"And Luis, and Thomas, and Jack, and Dare. There are prayers for them all, and love enough to make them. Hark! there are the drums, and the trumpets, and the gallop of the cavalry. Come, dearest, let us go to our mother. To-day, no one will remember Fray Ignatius."

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE STORMING OF THE ALAMO.

"Now, hearts,
Be ribbed with iron for this one attempt:
Set ope' your sluices, send the vigorous blood
Through every active limb for our relief."

"Now they begin the tragic play,
And with their smoky cannon banish day."

"Endure and conquer. God will soon dispose
To future good our past and present woes:
Resume your courage, and dismiss your care;
An hour will come with pleasure to relate
Your sorrows past, as benefits of Fate."

THE Señora was already dressed. She turned with a face full of fear and anger to her daughters as they entered her room—

"These American diablos! They are attacking the city. They will take it—that is to be expected—who can fight diablos? And what is to become of us? Oh, Antonia! Why did you prevent Fray Ignatius? We might now have been safe in the convent", and

Rachela nodded her head in assent, with an insufferable air of reproof and toleration.

Antonia saw that the time had not yet come for pleading her own cause. She left Isabel with her mother. The Señora's breakfast was waiting, and she offered to share it with her youngest daughter. Antonia went downstairs to prepare for herself some coffee. She was surprised and pleased to find it made. For a certain thought had come to Molly in the night and she had acted upon it—

"The praist is a strange praist, and almost as black as a nagur; and I'd be a poor body, I think, to let him be meddling wid my work. Shure, I never heard of the like of such interfering in Ireland, nor in the States at all!" Then turning to the Mexican cook, Manuel—"You may lave the fire alone till I bees done wid it."

"Fray Ignatius will not give you absolution if you disobey him."

"He can be kaping the same then. There is an Irish praist at San Patricio, and I'll be going there for my absolution; and I'll be getting none any nearer that an Irish soul will be a pin the better for. I'll say that, standing in

the church, to the saints themselves; and so be aff wid you and let the fire alone till I bees done wid it."

But it was not Molly's place to serve the food she cooked, and she did not trouble herself about the serving. When she had asserted her right to control her own work, and do it or neglect it as it seemed good to herself alone, she was satisfied. Over Antonia—who was at least half a Mexican—she acknowledged a Mexican priest to have authority; and she had no intention of interfering between Fray Ignatius and his lawful flock. She was smoking her pipe by the fire when Antonia entered the kitchen, and she neither lifted her eyes nor spoke to her.

Against such unreasonable isolation Antonia could not help a feeling of anger; and she heard with satisfaction the regular crack of the rifles. Her thought was—"They will make these people find their tongues also, very soon." She was exceedingly anxious for information; and, as she ate her roll and drank her coffee, she was considering how they could gain it. For even if Fray Ignatius were able to visit them, his report would be colored by his prej-

udices and his desires, and could not be relied on.

Her heart fluttered and sank; she was hot and cold, sanguine and fearful. She could not endure the idea of a suspense unrelieved by any reliable word. For the siege might be a long one. San Antonio was strongly walled and defended. The Alamo fortress stood in its centre. It had forty-eight cannon, and a garrison of a thousand men. Before it could be reached, the city had to be taken; and the inhabitants would in the main fight desperately for their homes.

As soon as she was alone with her mother, she pointed out these facts to her. "Let me write to Lopez Navarro, mi madre. He is a friend."

"Of the Americans! Si."

"Of freedom. He will send us word."

"Are you forgetful of what is moral and respectable, Antonia? That a young lady should write to Lopez Navarro—a man that is unmarried—is such a thing as never before happened! He would think the world had come to an end, or worse."

"Dear mother! In a time of trouble like

this, who would think wrong of us? Surely you might write."

"As you say, Antonia. Tell me, then, who will take the letter."

"The peon Ortiz will take it. This morning he brought in wood and kindled the fire, and I saw in his face the kindness of his heart."

After some further persuasion, the Señora agreed to write; and Ortiz undertook the commission, with a nod of understanding. Then there remained nothing to be done but to listen and to watch. Fortunately, however, Rachela found the centre of interest among the servants in the kitchen; and the Señora and her daughter could converse without espionage.

Just after sunset a letter arrived from Navarro. Rachela lingered in the room to learn its contents. But the Señora, having read them, passed the letter to Antonia and Isabel; and Rachela saw with anger that Antonia, having carefully considered it, threw it into the fire. And yet the news it brought was not unfavorable:

"SEÑORA MARIA FLORES WORTH:

"I send this on December the fifth, in the

year of our Blessed Lord and Lady 1835. It is my honor and pleasure to tell you that the Americans, having performed miracles of valor, reached the Plaza this afternoon. Here the main body of the Mexican troops received them, and there has been severe fighting. At sunset, the Mexicans retreated within the Alamo. The Texans have taken possession of the Veramendi House, and the portion of the city surrounding it. There has been a great slaughter of our poor countrymen. I charge myself whenever I pass the Plaza, to say a paternoster for the souls who fell there. Señora Maria Flores Worth, I kiss your hands. I kiss also the hands of the Señorita Antonia, and the hands of the Señorita Isabel, and I make haste to sign myself,

"Your servant,

"LOPEZ NAVARRO."

This little confidence between mother and daughters restored the tone of feeling between them. They had something to talk of, personal and exclusive. In the fear and uncertainty, they forgot priestly interdiction and clung to each other with that affection which is the strength of danger and the comforter of sorrow.

On the following day the depression deep-

ened. The sounds of battle were closer at hand. The Mexican servants had an air of insolence and triumph. Antonia feared for the evening's report—if indeed Navarro should be able to send one. She feared more when she saw the messenger early in the afternoon. "Too early is often worse than too late." The proverb shivered upon her trembling lips as she took the letter from him. The three women read it together, with sinking hearts:

"SEÑORA MARIA FLORES WORTH:

"This on the sixth of December, in the year of our Blessed Lord and Lady 1835. The brave, the illustrious Colonel Milam is dead. I watched him three hours in to-day's fight. A man so calm was inconceivable. He was smiling when the ball struck him—when he fell. The Texans, after his loss, retired to their quarters. This was at the hour of eleven. At the hour of one, the Mexicans made another sortie from the Alamo. The Texans rushed to meet them with an incredible vengeance. Their leader was General Burleson. He showed himself to General Cos in a sheet of flame. Such men are not to be fought. General Cos was compelled to retire to the Alamo. The battle is over for to-day. On this earth the soul has but a mortal sword. The water in

the river is red with blood. The Plaza is covered with the dead and the dying. I have the honor to tell you that these 'miserables' are being attended to by the noble, the charitable Señor Doctor Worth. As I write, he is kneeling among them. My soul adores his humanity. I humbly kiss your hands, Señora, and the hands of your exalted daughters.

"LOPEZ NAVARRO."

Until midnight this letter furnished the anxious, loving women with an unceasing topic of interest. The allusion to her husband made the Señora weep. She retired to her oratory and poured out her love and her fears in holy salutations, in thanksgivings and entreaties.

The next morning there was an ominous lull in the atmosphere. As men run backward to take a longer leap forward, so both armies were taking breath for a fiercer struggle. In the Worth residencia the suspense was becoming hourly harder to endure. The Señora and her daughters were hardly conscious of the home life around them. In that wonderful folk-speech which so often touches foundation truths, they were not all there. Their nobler part had projected itself beyond its limitations. It was really in the struggle. It mattered

little to them now whether food was cooked or not. They were neither hungry nor sleepy. Existence was prayer and expectation.

Just before sunset Antonia saw Don Lopez coming through the garden. The Señora, accompanied by her daughters, went to meet him. His face was perplexed and troubled:

"General Cos has been joined by Ugartechea with three hundred men," he said. "You will see now that the fight will be still more determined."

And before daylight broke on the morning of the 8th, the Americans attacked the Alamo. The black flag waved above them; the city itself had the stillness of death; but for hours the dull roar and the clamorous tumult went on without cessation. The Señora lay upon her bed motionless, with hands tightly locked. She had exhausted feeling, and was passive. Antonia and Isabel wandered from window to window, hoping to see some token which would indicate the course of events.

Nothing was visible but the ferocious flag flying out above the desperate men fighting below it. So black! So cruel and defiant it looked! It seemed to darken and fill the

whole atmosphere around it. And though the poor women had not dared to whisper to each other what it said to them, they knew in their own hearts that it meant, if the Americans failed, the instant and brutal massacre of every prisoner.

The husband and father were under its inhuman shadow. So most probably were Darius Grant and Luis Alveda. It was even likely that Jack might have returned ere the fight, and was with the besiegers. Every time they went to the window, it filled their hearts with horror.

In the middle of the afternoon it suddenly disappeared. Antonia watched it breathlessly. Several times before, it had been dropped by some American rifle; but this time it was not as speedily replaced. In a few minutes she uttered a shrill cry. It was in a voice so strained, so piercing, so unlike her own, that the Señora leaped from her bed. Antonia turned to meet her mother with white, parted lips. She was speechless with excess of feeling, but she pointed to the Alamo. The black flag was no longer there! A white one was flying in its place.

"*It is a surrender!*" gasped Antonia. "*It is a surrender!*" and, as if in response to her words, a mighty shout and a simultaneous salute of rifles hailed the emblem of victory.

An hour afterwards a little Mexican boy came running with all his speed. He brought a few lines from Don Lopez. They had evidently been written in a great hurry, and on a piece of paper torn from his pocket-book, but oh! how welcome they were. The very lack of formality gave to them a certain hurry of good fortune:

"May you and yours be God's care for many years to come, Señora! The Mexicans have surrendered the Alamo, and asked for quarter. These noble-minded Americans have given it. The Señor Doctor will bring you good news. I rejoice with you.

"LOPEZ NAVARRO."

Death and captivity had been turned away from their home, and the first impulse of these pious, simple-hearted women was a prayer of thanksgiving. Then Antonia remembered the uncomfortable state of the household, and the probable necessities of the men com-

ing back from mortal strife and the shadow of death.

She found that the news had already changed the domestic atmosphere. Every servant was attending to his duty. Every one professed a great joy in the expected arrival of the Señor. And what a happy impetus the hope gave to her own hands! How delightful it was to be once more arranging the evening meal, and brightening the rooms with fire and light!

Soon after dark they heard the swing of the garden gate, the tramp of rapid footsteps, and the high-pitched voices of excited men. The door was flung wide. The Señora forgot that it was cold. She went with outstretched arms to meet her husband. Dare and Luis were with him. They were black with the smoke of battle. Their clothing was torn and bloodstained; the awful light of the fierce struggle was still upon their faces. But they walked like heroes, and the glory of the deeds they had done crowned with its humanity, made them appear to the women that loved them but a little lower than the angels.

Doctor Worth held his wife close to his

heart and kissed her tears of joy away, and murmured upon her lips the tenderest words a woman ever hears—the words a man never perfectly learns till he has loved his wife through a quarter of a century of change, and sorrow, and anxiety. And what could Antonia give Dare but the embrace, the kiss, the sweet whispers of love and pride, which were the spontaneous outcome of both hearts?

There was a moment's hesitation on the part of Luis and Isabel. The traditions of caste and country, the social bonds of centuries, held them. But Isabel snapped them asunder. She looked at Luis. His eyes were alight with love for her, his handsome face was transfigured with the nobility of the emotions that possessed him. In spite of his disordered dress, he was incomparably handsome. When he said, "Angel mio!" and bent to kiss her hand, she lifted her lovely face to his, she put her arms around his neck, she cried softly on his breast, whispering sweet little diminutives of affection and pride. Such hours as followed are very rare in this life; and they are nearly always bought with a great price—paid for in advance with sorrow and anxiety, or

earned by such faithful watching and patient waiting as touches the very citadel of life.

The men were hungry; they had eaten nothing all day. How delicious was their meal! How happy and merry it made the Senora, and Antonia, and Isabel, to see them empty dish after dish; to see their unaffected enjoyment of the warm room, and bright fire, of their after-dinner coffee and tobacco. There was only one drawback to the joy of the reunion—the absence of Jack.

"His disappointment will be greater than ours," said Jack's father. "To be present at the freeing of his native city, and to bring his first laurels to his mother, was the brightest dream Jack had. But Jack is a fine rider, and is not a very fine marksman; so it was decided to send him with Houston to the Convention. We expected him back before the attack on the city began. Indeed, we were waiting for orders from the Convention to undertake it."

"Then you fought without orders, father?"

"Well, yes, Antonia—in a way. Delays in war are as dangerous as in love. We were surrounded by dragoons, who scoured the country in every direction to prevent our for-

aging. San Antonio *had* to be taken. Soon done was well done. On the third of December Colonel Milam stepped in front of the ranks, and asked if two hundred of the men would go with him and storm the city. The whole eleven hundred stepped forward, and gave him their hands and their word. From them two hundred of the finest marksmen were selected."

"I have to say that was a great scene, mi Roberto."

"The greater for its calmness, I think. There was no shouting, no hurrahing, no obvious enthusiasm. It was the simple assertion of serious men determined to carry out their object."

"And you stormed San Antonio with two hundred men, father?"

"But every man was a picked man. A Mexican could not show his head above the ramparts and live. We had no powder and ball to waste; and I doubt if a single ball missed its aim."

"A Mexican is like a Highland Scot in one respect," said Dare; "he fights best with steel. They are good cavalry soldiers."

"There are no finer cavalry in the world

than the horsemen from Santa Fé, Dare. But with powder and ball Mexicans trust entirely to luck; and luck is nowhere against Kentucky sharpshooters. Their balls very seldom reached us, though we were close to the ramparts; and we gathered them up by thousands, and sent them back with our double-Dupont powder. *Then* they did damage enough. In fact, we have taken the Alamo with Mexican balls."

"Under what flag did you fight, Roberto?"

"Under the Mexican republican flag of eighteen twenty-four; but indeed, Maria, I do not think we had one in the camp. We were destitute of all the trappings of war—we had no uniforms, no music, no flags, no positive military discipline. But we had one heart and mind, and one object in view; and this four days' fight has shown what men can do, who are moved by a single, grand idea."

The Señora lay upon a sofa; the doctor sat by her side. Gradually their conversation became more low and confidential. They talked of their sons, and their probable whereabouts; of all that the Señora and her daughters had suffered from the disaffection of the servants;

and the attitude taken by Fray Ignatius. And the doctor noticed, without much surprise, that his wife's political sympathies were still in a state of transition and uncertainty. She could not avoid prophesying the speedy and frightful vengeance of Mexico. She treated the success at San Antonio as one of the accidents of war. She looked forward to an early renewal of hostilities.

"My countrymen are known to me, Roberto," she said, with a touch that was almost a hope of vengeance. "They have an insurmountable honor; they will revenge this insult to it in some terrible way. If the gracious Maria holds not the hands of Santa Anna, he will utterly destroy the Americans! He will be like a tiger that has become mad."

"I am not so much afraid of Santa Anna as of Fray Ignatius. Promise me, my dear Maria, that you will not suffer yourself or your children to be decoyed by him into a convent. I should never see you again."

The discussion on this subject was long and eager. Antonia, talking with Dare a little apart, could not help hearing it and feeling great interest in her father's entreaties, even

though she was discussing with Dare the plans for their future. For Dare had much to tell his betrothed. During the siege, the doctor had discovered that his intended son-in-law was a fine surgeon. Dare had, with great delicacy, been quite reticent on this subject, until circumstances made his assistance a matter of life and death; and the doctor understood and appreciated the young man's silence.

"He thinks I might have a touch of professional jealousy—he thinks I might suspect him of wanting a partnership as well as a wife; he wishes to take his full share of the dangers of war, without getting behind the shield of his profession"; these feelings the doctor understood, and he passed from Fray Ignatius to this pleasanter topic, gladly.

He told the Señora what a noble son they were going to have; he said, "when the war is over, Maria, my dear, he shall marry Antonia."

"And what do you say, Roberto, if I should give them the fine house on the Plaza that my brother Perfecto left me?"

"If you do that you will be the best mother

in the world, Maria. I then will take Dare into partnership. He is good and clever; and I am a little weary of work. I shall enjoy coming home earlier to you. We will go riding and walking, and our courting days will begin again."

"Maria Santissima! How delightful that will be, Roberto! And as for our Isabel, shall we not make her happy also? Luis should have done as his own family have done; a young man to go against his mother and his uncles, that is very wicked! but, if we forgive that fault, well, then, Luis is as good as good bread."

"I think so. He began the study of the law. He must finish it. He must learn the American laws also. I am not a poor man, Maria. I will give Isabel the fortune worthy of a Yturbide or a Flores—a fortune that will make her very welcome to the Alvedas."

The Señora clasped her husband's hand with a smile. They were sweetening their own happiness with making the happiness of their children. They looked first at Antonia. She sat with Dare, earnestly talking to him in a low voice. Dare clasped in his own the dear little

hand that had been promised to him. Antonia bent toward her lover; her fair head rested against his shoulder. Isabel sat in a large chair, and Luis leaned on the back of it, stooping his bright face to the lovely one which was sometimes dropped to hide her blushes, and sometimes lifted with flashing eyes to answer his tender words.

"My happiness is so great, Roberto, I am even tired of being happy. Call Rachela. I must go to sleep. To-night I cannot even say an ave."

"God hears the unspoken prayer in your heart, Maria; and to-night let me help you upstairs. My arm is stronger than Rachela's."

She rose with a little affectation of greater weakness and lassitude than she really felt. But she wished to be weak, so that her Roberto might be strong—to be quite dependent on his care and tenderness And she let her daughters embrace her so prettily, and then offered her hand to Dare and Luis with so much grace and true kindness that both young men were enchanted.

"It is to be seen that they are gentlemen," she said, as she went slowly upstairs on her

husband's arm—"and hark! that is the singing of Luis. What is it he says?" They stood still to listen. Clear and sweet were the chords of the mandolin, and melodiously to them Luis was protesting—

> "Freedom shall have our shining blades!
> Our hearts are yours, fair Texan maids!"

## CHAPTER X.

### THE DOCTOR AND THE PRIEST.

"I tell thee, priest, if the world were wise
They would not wag one finger in your quarrels:
Your heaven you promise, but our earth you covet;
The Phaetons of mankind, who fire the world
Which you were sent by preaching but to warm."

Your Saviour came not with a gaudy show,
Nor was His kingdom of the world below:
The crown He wore was of the pointed thorn;
In purple He was crucified, not born.
They who contend for place and high degree
Are not His sons, but those of Zebedee."

—DRYDEN.

THE exalted state of mind which the victorious men had brought home with them did not vanish with sleep. The same heroic atmosphere was in the house in the morning. Antonia's face had a brightness upon it that never yet was the result of mere flesh and blood. When she came into the usual sitting-room, Dare was already there; indeed, he had risen purposely for this hour. Their smiles and glances met each other with

an instantaneous understanding. It was the old Greek greeting "*Rejoice!*" without the audible expression.

Never again, perhaps, in all their lives would moments so full of sweetness and splendor come to them. They were all the sweeter because blended with the homely duties that fell to Antonia's hands. As she went about ordering the breakfast, and giving to the table a festal air, Dare thought of the old Homeric heroes, and the daughters of the kings who ministered to their wants. The bravest of them had done no greater deeds of personal valor than had been done by the little band of American pioneers and hunters with whom he had fought the last four days. The princes among them had been welcomed by no sweeter and fairer women than had welcomed his companions and himself.

And, though his clothing was black with the smoke of the battle and torn with the fray, never had Dare himself looked so handsome. There was an unspeakable radiance in his fair face. The close, brown curls of his hair; his tall figure, supple and strong; his air of youth, and valor, and victory; the love-light

in his eyes; the hopes in his heart, made him for the time really more than a mere mortal man. He walked like the demi-gods he was thinking of. The most glorious ideal of life, the brightest dream of love that he had ever had, found in this hour their complete realization.

The Señora did not come down; but Isabel and Luis and the doctor joined the breakfast party. Luis had evidently been to see Lopez Navarro before he did so; for he wore a new suit of dark blue velvet and silver, a sash of crimson silk, the neatest of patent leather shoes, and the most beautifully embroidered linen. Dare gave him a little smile and nod of approbation. He had not thought of fine clothing for himself; but then for the handsome, elegant, Mexican youth it seemed precisely the right thing. And Isabel, in her scarlet satin petticoat, and white embroideries and satin slippers, looked his proper mate. Dare and Antonia, and even the doctor, watched their almost childlike devotion to each other with sympathetic delight.

Oh, if such moments could only last! No, no; as a rule they last long enough. Joy

wearies as well as sorrow. An abiding rapture would make itself a sorrow out of our very weakness to bear it. We should become exhausted and exacting, and be irritated by the limitations of our nature, and our inability to create and to endure an increasing rapture. It is because joy is fugitive that it leaves us a delightsome memory. It is far better, then, not to hold the rose until it withers in our fevered hand.

The three women watched their heroes go back to the city. The doctor looked very little older than his companions. He sat his horse superbly, and he lifted his hat to the proud Señora with a loving grace which neither of the young men could excel. In that far back year, when he had wooed her with the sweet words she taught him, he had not looked more manly and attractive. There is a perverse disposition in women to love personal prowess, and to adore the heroes of the battle-field ; and never had the Señora loved her husband as she did at that hour.

In his capacity of physician he had done unnoticed deeds of far greater bravery—gone into a Comanche camp that was being devas-

tated by smallpox—or galloped fifty miles alone in the night, through woods haunted by savage men and beasts, to succor some little child struggling with croup, or some frontiersman pierced with an arrow. The Señora had always fretted and scolded a little when he thus exposed his life. But the storming of the Alamo! That was a bravery she could understand. Her Roberto was indeed a hero! Though she could not bring herself to approve the cause for which he fought, she was as sensitive as men and women always are to victorious valor and a successful cause.

Rachela was in a state of rebellion. Nothing but the express orders of Fray Ignatius, to remain where she was, prevented her leaving the Worths; for the freedom so suddenly given to Isabel had filled her with indignation. She was longing to be in some house where she could give adequate expression to the diabolical temper she felt it right to indulge.

In the afternoon it was some relief to see the confessor coming up the garden. He had resumed his usual deliberate pace. His hands were folded upon his breast. He looked as the mournful Jeremiah may have looked, when

he had the burden of a heavy prophecy to deliver.

The Señora sat down with a doggedly sullen air, which Antonia understood very well. It meant, "I am not to be forced to take any way but my own, to-day"; and the wise priest understood her mood as soon as he entered the room. He put behind him the reproof he had been meditating. He stimulated her curiosity; he asked her sympathy. No man knew better than Fray Ignatius, when to assume sacerdotal authority and when to lay it aside.

And the Señora was never proof against the compliment of his personal friendship. The fight, as it affected himself and his brotherhood and the convent, was full of interest to her. She smiled at Brother Servando's childish alarm; she was angry at an insult offered to the venerable abbot; she condoled with the Sisters, wept at the danger that the famous statue of the Virgin de Los Remedias had been exposed to; and was altogether as sympathetic as he could desire, until her own affairs were mentioned.

"And you also, my daughter? The sword

has pierced your heart too, I am sure! To know that your husband and sons were fighting against your God and your country! Holy Mother! How great must have been your grief. But, for your comfort, I tell you that the saints who have suffered a fiery martyrdom stand at the feet of those who, like you, endure the continual crucifixion of their affections."

The Señora was silent, but not displeased; and the priest then ventured a little further:

"But there is an end to all trials, daughter; and I now absolve you from the further struggle. Decide this day for your God and your country. Make an offering to Almighty God and the Holy Mother of your earthly love. Give yourself and your daughters and all that you have to the benign and merciful Church. Show these rebels and heretics—these ungrateful recipients of Mexican bounty—what a true Catholic is capable of. His Divine Majesty and the Holy Mary demand this supreme sacrifice from you."

"Father, I have my husband, and my sons; to them, also, I owe some duties."

"The Church will absolve you from them."

"It would break my heart."

"Listen then: If it is your right hand, or your right eye—that is, if it is your husband, or your child—you are commanded to give them up; or—it is God's word—there is only hell fire."

"Mother of Sorrows, pity me! What shall I do?"

She looked with the terror of a child into the dark, cruel face of the priest. It was as immovably stern as if carved out of stone. Then her eyes sought those of Antonia, who sat at a distant window with her embroidery in her hand. She let it fall when her mother's pitiful, uncertain glance asked from her strength and counsel. She rose and went to her. Never had the tall, fair girl looked so noble. A sorrowful majesty, that had something in it of pity and something of anger, gave to her countenance, her movements, and even her speech, a kind of authority.

"Dear mother, do as the beloved and kind-hearted Ruth did. Like you, she married one not of her race and not of her religion. Even when God had taken him from her, she chose

to remain with his people—to leave her own people and abide with his mother. For this act God blessed her, and all nations in all ages have honored her."

"Ruth! Ruth! Ruth! What has Ruth to do with the question? Presumptuous one! Ruth was a heathen woman—a Moabite—a race ten times accursed."

"Pardon, father. Ruth was the ancestress of our blessed Saviour, and of the Virgin Mary."

"Believe not the wicked one, Señora? She is blinded with false knowledge. She is a heretic. I have long suspected it. She has not been to confession for nine months."

"You wrong me, father. Every day, twice a day, I confess my sins humbly."

"Chito! You are in outrageous sin. But, then, what else? I hear, indeed, that you read wicked books—even upon your knees you read them."

"I read my Bible, father."

"Bring it to me. How could a child like you read the Bible? It is a book for bishops and archbishops, and the Immaculate Father himself. What an arrogance? What an in-

solence of self-conceit must possess so young a heart? Saints of God! It confounds me."

The girl stood with burning cheeks gazing at the proud, passionate man, but she did not obey his order.

"Señora, my daughter! See you with your own eyes the fruit of your sin. Will you dare to become a partner in such wickedness?"

"Antonia! Antonia! Go at once and bring here this wicked book. Oh, how can you make so miserable a mother who loves you so much?"

In a few moments Antonia returned with the objectionable book. "My dear grandmother gave it to me," she said. "Look, mi madre, here is my name in her writing. Is it conceivable that she would give to your Antonia a book that she ought not to read?"

The Señora took it in her hands and turned the leaves very much as a child might turn those of a book in an unknown tongue, in which there were no illustrations nor anything that looked the least interesting. It was a pretty volume of moderate size, bound in purple morocco, and fastened with gilt clasps.

"I see the word *God* in it very often, Fray Ignatius. Perhaps, indeed, it is not bad."

"It is a heretic Bible, I am sure. Could anything be more sinful, more disrespectful to God, more dangerous for a young girl?" and as he said the words he took it from the Señora's listless hands, glanced at the obnoxious title-page, and then, stepping hastily to the hearth, flung the book upon the burning logs.

With a cry of horror, pain, amazement, all blended, Antonia sprang towards the fire, but Fray Ignatius stood with outstretched arms before it.

"Stand back!" he cried. "To save your soul from eternal fires, I burn the book that has misled you!"

"Oh, my Bible! Oh, my Bible! Oh, mother! mother!" and sobbing and crying out in her fear and anger, she fled down stairs and called the peon Ortiz.

"Do you know where to find the Señor Doctor? If you do, Ortiz, take the swiftest horse and bring him here."

The man looked with anger into the girl's troubled face. For a moment he was something unlike himself. "I can find him; I will bring him in fifteen minutes. Corpus Christi! it is here he should be."

The saddled horse in the stable was mounted as he muttered one adjuration and oath after another, and Antonia sat down at the window to watch for the result of her message. Fortunately, Rachela had been so interested in the proceedings, and so determined to know all about them, that she seized the opportunity of the outcry to fly to "her poor Señora," and thus was ignorant of the most unusual step taken by Antonia.

Indeed, no one was aware of it but herself and Ortiz; and the servants in the kitchen looked with a curious interest at the doctor riding into the stable yard as if his life depended upon his speed. Perhaps it did. All of them stopped their work to speculate upon the circumstance.

They saw him fling himself from the saddle; they saw Antonia run to meet him; they heard her voice full of distress—they knew it was the voice of complaint. They were aware it was answered by a stamp on the flagged hall of the doctor's iron-heeled boot—which rang through the whole house, and which was but the accompaniment of the fierce exclamation that went with it.

They heard them mount the stairs together, and then they were left to their imaginations. As for Antonia, she was almost terrified at the storm she had raised. Never had she seen anger so terrible. Yet, though he had not said a word directly to her, she was aware of his full sympathy. He grasped her hand, and entered the Señora's room with her. His first order was to Rachela—

"Leave the house in five minutes; no, in three minutes. I will tell Ortiz to send your clothes after you. Go!"

"My Señora! Fray Ig—"

"*Go!*" he thundered. "Out of my house! Fly! I will not endure you another moment."

The impetus of his words was like a great wind. They drove the woman before him, and he shut the door behind her with a terrifying and amazing rage. Then he turned to the priest—

"Fray Ignatius, you have abused my hospitality, and my patience. You shall do so no longer. For twenty-six years I have suffered your interference—"

"The Señor is a prudent man. The wise

bear what they cannot resist"; and with a gentle smile and lifted eyebrows Fray Ignatius crossed himself.

"I have respected your faith, though it was the faith of a bigot; and your opinions, though they were false and cruel, because you believed honestly in them. But you shall not again interfere with my wife, or my children, or my servants, or my house."

"The Señor Doctor is not prince, or pope. '*Shall*,' and '*shall not*,' no one but my own ecclesiastical superiors can say to me."

"I say, you shall not again terrify my wife and insult my daughter, and disorganize my whole household! And, as the God of my mother hears me, you shall not again burn up His Holy Word under my roof. Never, while I dwell beneath it, enter my gates, or cross my threshold, or address yourself to any that bear my name, or eat my bread." With the words, he walked to the door and held it open. It was impossible to mistake the unspoken order, and there was something in the concentrated yet controlled passion of Robert Worth which even the haughty priest did not care to irritate beyond its bounds.

He gathered his robe together, and with lifted eyes muttered an ejaculatory prayer. Then he said in slow, cold, precise tones:

"For the present, I go. Very good. I shall come back again. The saints will take care of that. Señora, I give you my blessing. Señor, you may yet find the curse of a poor priest an inconvenience."

He crossed himself at the door, and cast a last look at the Señora, who had thrown herself upon her knees, and was crying out to Mary and the saints in a passion of excuses and reproaches. She was deaf to all her husband said. She would not suffer Antonia to approach her. She felt that now was the hour of her supreme trial. She had tolerated the rebellion of her husband, and her sons, and her daughter, and now she was justly punished. They had driven away from her the confessor, and the maid who had been her counsellor and her reliance from her girlhood.

Her grief and terror were genuine, and therefore pitiful; and, in spite of his annoyance, the doctor recognized the fact. In a moment, as soon as they were alone, he put aside his anger. He knelt beside her, he soothed her with ten-

der words, he pleaded the justice of his indignation. And ere long she began to listen to his excuses, and to complain to him:

He had been born a heretic, and therefore might be excused a little, even by Almighty God. But Antonia! Her sin was beyond endurance. She herself, and the good Sisters, and Fray Ignatius, had all taught her in her infancy the true religion. And her Roberto must see that this was a holy war—a war for the Holy Catholic Church. No wonder Fray Ignatius was angry.

"My dear Maria, every church thinks itself right; and all other churches wrong. God looks at the heart. If it is right, it makes all worship true. But when the Americans have won Texas, they will give to every one freedom to worship God as they wish."

"Saints in heaven, Roberto! That day comes not. One victory! Bah! That is an accident. The Mexicans are a very brave people,—the bravest in the world. Did they not drive the Spaniards out of their country; and it is not to be contradicted that the Spaniards have conquered all other nations. That I saw in a book. The insult the Americans

have given to Mexico will be revenged. Her honor has been compromised before the world. Very well, it will be made bright again; yes, Fray Ignatius says with blood and fire it will be made bright."

"And in the mean time, Maria, we have taken from them the city they love best of all. An hour ago I saw General Cos, with eleven hundred Mexican soldiers, pass before a little band of less than two hundred Americans and lay down their arms. These defenders of the Alamo had all been blessed by the priests. Their banners had been anointed with holy oil and holy water. They had all received absolution every day before the fight began; they had been promised a free passage through purgatory and a triumphant entry into heaven."

"Well, I will tell you something; Fray Ignatius showed it to me—it was a paper printed. The rebels and their wives and children are to be sent from this earth—you may know where they will all go, Roberto—Congress says so. The States will give their treasures. The archbishops will give the episcopal treasures. The convents will give their gems and gold ornaments. Ten thousand men had left for San

Antonio, and ten thousand more are to follow; the whole under our great President Santa Anna. Oh, yes! The rebels in Washington are to be punished also. It is well known that they sent soldiers to Nacogdoches. Mexicans are not blind moles, and they have their intelligence, you know. All the States who have helped these outrageous ingrates are to be devastated, and you will see that your famous Washington will be turned into a heap of stones. I have seen these words in print, Roberto. I assure you, that it is not just a little breath—what one or another says—it is the printed orders of the Mexican government. That is something these Americans will have to pay attention to."

The doctor sighed, and answered the sorrowful, credulous woman with a kiss. What was the use of reasoning with simplicity so ignorant and so confident? He turned the conversation to a subject that always roused her best and kindest feelings—her son Jack.

"I have just seen young Dewees, Maria. He and Jack left San Felipe together. Dewees brought instructions to General Burleson; and Jack carried others to Fannin, at Goliad."

She took her husband's hands and kissed them. "That indeed! Oh, Roberto! If I could only see my Jack once more! I have had a constant accusation to bear about him. Till I kiss my boy again, the world will be all dark before my face. If Our Lady will grant me this miraculous favor, I will always afterwards be exceedingly religious. I will give all my desires to the other world."

"Dearest Maria, God did not put us in this world to be always desiring another. There is no need, mi queridita, to give up this life as a bad affair. We shall be very happy again, soon."

"As you say. If I could only see Jack! For that, I would promise God Almighty and you Roberto to be happy. I would forgive the rebels and the heretics—for they are well acquainted with hell road, and will guide each other there without my wish."

"I am sure if Jack has one day he will come to you. And when he hears of the surrender of General Cos—"

"Well now, it was God's will that General Cos should surrender. What more can be said? It is sufficient."

"Let me call Antonia. She is miserable at your displeasure; and it is not Antonia's fault."

"Pardon me, Roberto. I have seen Antonia. She is not agreeable and obedient to Fray Ignatius."

"She has been very wickedly used by him; and I fear he intends to do her evil."

"It is not convenient to discuss the subject now. I will see Isabel; she is a good child—my only comfort. Paciencia! there is Luis Alveda singing; Isabel will now be deaf to all else"; and she rose with a sigh and walked towards the casement looking into the garden.

Luis was coming up the oleander walk. The pretty trees were thinner now, and had only a pink blossom here and there. But the bright winter sun shone through them, and fell upon Luis and Isabel. For she had also seen him coming, and had gone to meet him, with a little rainbow-tinted shawl over her head. She looked so piquant and so happy. She seemed such a proper mate for the handsome youth at her side that a word of dissent was not possible. The doctor said only, "She is so like you, Maria. I remember when you were still

more lovely, and when from your balcony you made me with a smile the happiest man in the world."

Such words were never lost ones; for the Señora had a true and great love for her husband. She gave him again a smile, she put her hand in his, and then there were no further conciliations required. They stood in the sunshine of their own hearts, and listened a moment to the gay youth, singing, how at—

> The strong old Alamo
> Two hundred men, with rifles true,
> Shot down a thousand of the foe,
> And broke the triple ramparts through;
> And dropped the flag as black as night,
> For Freedom's green and red and white.*

* The flag of the Mexican Republic of 1824 was green, red and white in color.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A HAPPY TRUCE.

"Well, honor is the subject of my story;
I cannot tell what you and other men
Think of this life; but for my single self,
I had as lief not be, as live to be
In awe of such a thing as I myself."

"Two truths are told
As happy prologues to the swelling act,
Of the imperial theme."

"This is the eve of Christmas,
No sleep from night to morn;
The Virgin is in travail,
At twelve will the Child be born."

CITIES have not only a certain physiognomy; they have also a decided mental and moral character, and a definite political tendency. There are good and bad cities, artistic and commercial cities, scholarly and manufacturing cities, aristocratic and radical cities. San Antonio, in its political and social character, was a thoroughly radical city. Its population, composed in a large measure of adventur-

ous units from various nationalities, had that fluid rather than fixed character, which is susceptible to new ideas. For they were generally men who had found the restraints of the centuries behind them to be intolerable—men to whom freedom was the grand ideal of life.

It may be easily undertood that this element in the population of San Antonio was a powerful one, and that a little of such leaven would stir into activity a people who, beneath the crust of their formal piety, had still something left of that pride and adventurous spirit which distinguished the Spain of Ferdinand and Isabel.

In fact, no city on the American continent has such a bloody record as San Antonio. From its settlement by the warlike monks of 1692, to its final capture by the Americans in 1836, it was well named "the city of the sword." The Comanche and the white man fought around its walls their forty years' battle for supremacy. From 1810 to 1821 its streets were constantly bloody with the fight between the royalists and republicans, and the city and the citadel passed from one party to the other continually. And when it came to the question of freedom and American domina-

tion, San Antonio was, as it had ever been, the great Texan battle-field.

Its citizens then were well used to the fortunes and changes of war. Men were living who had seen the horrors of the *auto da fe* and the splendors of viceregal authority. Insurgent nobles, fighting priests, revolutionizing Americans, all sorts and conditions of men, all chances and changes of religious and military power, had ruled it with a temporary absolutism during their generation.

In the main there was a favorable feeling regarding its occupation by the Americans. The most lawless of them were law-abiding in comparison with any kind of victorious Mexicans. Americans protected private property, they honored women, they observed the sanctity of every man's home; "and, as for being heretics, that was an affair for the saints and the priests; the comfortable benefits of the Holy Catholic Church, had not been vouchsafed to all nations."

Political changes are favorable to religious tolerance, and the priests themselves had been sensible of a great decrease in their influence during the pending struggle. Prominent Mexi-

cans had given aid and comfort to the Americans in spite of their spiritual orders, and there were many men who, like Lopez Navarro, did not dare to go to confession, because they would have been compelled to acknowledge themselves rebels.

When the doctor and Dare and Luis reached the Plaza, the morning after the surrender, they found the city already astir. Thousands of women were in the churches saying masses for the dead; the men stood at their store doors or sat smoking on their balconies, chatting with the passers-by or watching the movements of the victorious army and the evacuation of the conquered one.

Nearly all of the brave two hundred occupied the Plaza. They were still greatly excited by the miraculous ecstacy of victory. But when soldiers in the death-pang rejoice under its influence, what wonder that the living feel its intoxicating rapture? They talked and walked as if they already walked the streets of Mexico. All things seemed possible to them. The royalty of their carriage, the authority in their faces, gave dignity even to their deer-skin clothing. Its primitive character was its

distinction, and the wearers looked like the demi-gods of the heroic stage of history.

Lopez Navarro touched the doctor and directed his attention to them. "Does the world, Señor, contain the stuff to make their counterparts?"

"They are Americans, Navarro. And though there are a variety of Americans, they have only one opinion about submitting to tyrants—*they won't do it!*"

This was the conversation interrupted by Ortiz and the message he brought, and the doctor was thoroughly sobered by the events following. He was not inclined to believe, as the majority of the troops did, that Mexico was conquered. He expected that the Señora's prediction would be verified. And the personal enmity which the priesthood felt to him induced a depressing sense of personal disaster.

Nothing in the house or the city seemed inclined to settle. It took a few days to draw up the articles of capitulation and clear the town of General Cos and the Mexican troops. And he had no faith in their agreement to "retire from Texas, and never again carry arms against the Americans." He knew that they

did not consider it any sin to make "a mental reservation" against a heretic. He was quite sure that if Cos met reinforcements, he would have to be fought over again immediately.

And amid these public cares and considerations, he had serious private ones. The Señora was still under the control of Fray Ignatius. It required all the influence of his own personal presence and affection to break the spiritual captivity in which he held her. He knew that the priest had long been his enemy.

He saw that Antonia was hated by him. He was in the shadow of a terror worse than death —that of a long, hopeless captivity. A dungeon and a convent might become to them a living grave, in which cruelty and despair would slowly gnaw life away.

And yet, for a day or two he resolved not to speak of his terror. The Señora was so happy in his presence, and she had such kind confidences to give him about her plans for her children's future, that he could not bear to alarm her. And the children also were so full of youth's enthusiasms and love's sweet dreams. Till the last moment why should he awaken them? And as the strongest mental element

in a home gives the tone to it, so Dare and Antonia, with the doctor behind them, gave to the Mexican household almost an American freedom of intercourse and community of pleasure.

The Señora came to the parlor far more frequently, and in her own apartments her children visited her with but slight ceremony. They discussed all together their future plans. They talked over a wonderful journey which they were to take in company to New Orleans, and Washington, and New York, and perhaps even to London and Paris—"who could tell, if the Señora would be so good as to enjoy herself?" They ate more together. They got into the habit of congregating about the same hearthstone. It was the Señora's first real experience of domestic life.

In about six days the Mexican forces left the city. The terms of surrender granted General Cos struck the Mexicans with a kind of wonder. They had fought with the express declaration that they would take no American prisoner. Yet the Americans not only permitted Cos and his troops to leave under parole of honor, but gave them their arms and

sufficient ammunition to protect themselves from the Indians on their journey home. They allowed them also all their private property. They furnished them with the provisions necessary to reach the Rio Grande. They took charge of their sick and wounded. They set all the Mexican prisoners at liberty—in short, so great was their generosity and courtesy that the Mexicans were unable to comprehend their motives.

Even Lopez was troubled at it. "I assure you," he said to Dr. Worth, "they will despise such civility; they will not believe in its sincerity. At this very blessed hour of God, they are accusing the Americans of being afraid to press their advantage. Simply, you will have the fight to make over again. I say this, because I know Santa Anna."

"Santa Anna is but a man, Lopez."

"Me perdonas! He is however a man who knows a trick more than the devil. One must be careful of a bull in front, of a mule behind, and of a monk and Santa Anna on all sides. At the word monk, Lopez glanced significantly at a passing priest, and Doctor Worth saw that it was Fray Ignatius.

"He sprinkled the Mexican troops with holy water, and blessed them as they left the city this morning. He has the ear of General Cos. He is not a man to offend, I assure you, Doctor."

The doctor walked thoughtfully away. San Antonio was full of his friends, yet never had he felt himself and his family to be in so much danger. And the words of Lopez had struck a responding chord in his own consciousness. The careless bravery, the splendid generosity of his countrymen was at least premature. He went through the city with observing eyes, and saw much to trouble him.

The gates of Alamo were open. Crockett lounged upon his rifle in the Plaza. A little crowd was around him, and the big Tennesseean hunter was talking to them. Shouts of laughter, bravas of enthusiasm, answered the homely wit and stirring periods that had over and over "made room for Colonel Crockett," both in the Tennessee Legislature and the United States Congress. His rifle seemed a part of him—a kind of third arm. His confident manner, his manliness and bravery, turned his wit into wisdom. The young

fellows around found in him their typical leader.

The elegant James Bowie was sitting on the verandah of the Veramendi House, calmly smoking. His fair, handsome face, clear blue eyes and mild manners, gave no indication of the gigantic physical strength and tremendous coolness and courage of the man who never tolerated an enemy in his presence. Burleson and Travis were talking under the shade of a China tree, and there were little groups of American soldiers on every street; this was what he saw, and yet a terrible sense of insecurity oppressed him.

The city, moreover, was not settling to its usual business, though there were many preparations for public and private entertainments. After passing Colonel Bowie, he met David Burnett. The shrewd statesman from New Jersey had a shadow upon his face. He stopped Doctor Worth and spoke frankly to him. "We are in greater danger now than when we were under fire," he said. "Santa Anna will come on us like a lion from the swellings of Jordan. I wish Houston knew our position as it really is. We must either have more men to defend

this city or we must blow up the Alamo and be ready to leave it at a moment's notice."

"Why were such favorable terms given to General Cos and his troops? I cannot understand it."

"I will tell you an amazing fact. When Cos ran up that white flag on the Alamo, we had not a single round of ammunition left; complaisance was necessary until Cos made over to us the Mexican arms, ammunition, property and money."

Worth turned and looked at the fort. A great red flag on which was the word T-E-X-A-S floated from its battlements, and there were two men standing on its roof, with their faces westward.

"They are the lookouts," said Burnett, "and we have scouts through the surrounding country; but Santa Anna will come, when he comes, with tens of thousands."

"And there is a line where even the coolest courage and the most brilliant bravery succumbs to mere numbers—Eh!"

"That is what I mean, Doctor."

"Where is Houston?"

"On the Brazos, at the small town of Wash-

ington. The council have established headquarters there."

Their conversation was interrupted by the ringing of a little bell, and the doleful supplications of a priest followed by a crowd of idle men and women. He was begging, "for the sake of the Holy Virgin," alms to say masses for the soul of an unfortunate, who had not left a peso for his burial. He droned on, and no one noticed him until James Bowie stretched his tall figure, sauntered up to the monk, and dropped a gold piece into his cap. He did not stay to hear the exclamations and the gracias, but with steps that rang like metal upon metal took his way to the Alamo.

However, dangers postponed make the most timorous indifferent to them; and when General Cos did not return, and nothing was heard of Santa Anna, every one began to take up their ordinary life again. The temper of the Americans also encouraged this disposition. They were discovered neither to be bloodthirsty nor cannibals. It was even seen that they enjoyed the fandango and the monté tables, and that a proposition for a bull-fight at Christmas was not opposed by them.

And in spite of all anxieties, there were many sweet and unusual pleasures in the Worth home. The discipline of the troops was so lenient that Dare and Luis—one or both—were generally there in the evenings. Their turns as scouts or watchman at the Alamo only made more delightful the hours when they were exempted from these duties. As for the doctor, he had been released from all obligations but those pertaining to his profession, and Antonia noticed that he spent every hour he could spare with the Señora. For some reason, he appeared determined to strengthen his influence over her.

On Christmas Eve the old city was very gay. The churches were decorated, and splendidly dressed men and women passed in and out with smiles and congratulations. The fandangoes and the gambling houses were all open. From the huertas around, great numbers of families had come to receive absolution and keep the Nativity. Their rich clothing and air of idleness gave a holiday feeling to the streets noisy with the buzzing of the guitar, the metallic throb of the cithara, the murmurs of voices, and the cries of the hawkers,

Priests, Mexicans, Indians and Americans touched each other on the narrow thoroughfares, but that indescribable feeling of good will which comes with Christmas pervaded the atmosphere, and gave, even in the midst of war and danger, a sense of anticipated pleasure.

At the Worth residence there was a household feast. The Señora and her daughters were in full dress. They were waiting for the dear ones who had promised to join them at the Angelus. One by one the houses around were illuminated. Parties of simple musicians began to pass each other continually—they were going to serenade the blessed Mary all night long. As Antonia closed the balcony window, half a dozen of these young boys passed the garden hedge singing to the clacking of their castanets—

> "This is the eve of Christmas,
> No sleep from night to morn,
> The Virgin is in travail,
> At twelve will the Child be born."

Luis appeared at the same moment. He caught up the wild melody and came up the garden path singing it. Dare and the doctor

followed him. It struck Antonia that they were talking of a change, or of something important. But there was no time for observation. Isabel, radiant in crimson satin, with her white mantilla over her head, darted forward to meet Luis, and turned his song to the Virgin into a little adulation for herself. Dare and the doctor took Antonia's hands, and there was something in the silent clasp of each which made her heart tremble.

But she was not one of those foolish women who enquire after misfortune. She could wait and let the evil news find her, and by so doing she won many a bright hour from the advancing shadows. The Señora was in unusual spirits. She had obtained a new confessor. "A man of the most seraphic mind, and, moreover, so fortunate as to be connected with the house of Flores." He had been gentle to her in the matter of penances, and not set her religious obligations above her capacities. Consequently, the Señora had laid aside her penitential garments. She was in full Castilian costume, and looked very handsome. But Antonia, who had been in New York during those years when she would otherwise have been learning

how to wear a mantilla and use a fan, did not attempt such difficulties of the toilet. She knew that she would look unnatural in them, and she adhered to the American fashions of her day. But in a plain frock of dark satin trimmed with minever bands, she looked exceedingly noble and lovely.

The meal was a very merry one, and after it Lopez Navarro joined the party and they had music and dancing, and finally gathered around the fire to hear the singing of Luis. He knew a great many of the serenades, and as he sang of the Virgin and the Babe, a sweeter peace, a more solemn joy, came to each heart. It was like bringing something of the bliss of heaven into the bliss of earth. The Señora's eyes were full of tears; she slipped her hand into her husband's and looked at him with a face which asked, "Do you not also feel the eternity of a true love?"

"How sweet and wild are these serenades, Luis!" said Antonia. "I wonder who wrote them?"

"But, then, they were never written, my sister. Out of the hearts of lonely shepherds they came; or of women spinning in their

quiet houses; yes, even of soldiers in the strong places keeping their watch."

"That is the truth, Luis," answered Isabel. "And every Christmas, when I was in the convent, the Sisters made a serenade to the Virgin, or a seguidilla to our blessed Lord. Very still are the Sisters, but when it comes to singing, I can assure you the angels might listen!"

"There is a seguidilla I hear everywhere," said the doctor; "and I never hear it without feeling the better for listening. It begins—'So noble a Lord.'"

"That, indeed!" cried Luis. "Who knows it not? It is the seguidilla to our blessed Lord, written by the daughter of Lope de Vega—the holy Marcela Carpio. You know it, Señora?"

"As I know my Credo, Luis."

"And you, Isabel?"

"Since I was a little one, as high as my father's knee. Rachela taught it to me."

"And you, Lopez?"

"That is sure, Luis."

"And I, too!" said Antonia, smiling. "Here is your mandolin. Strike the chords, and we

will all sing with you. My father will remember also." And the doctor smiled an assent, as the young man resigned Isabel's hand with a kiss, and swept the strings in that sweetness and power which flows invisibly, but none the less surely, from the heart to the instrument.

"It is to my blessed Lord and Redeemer, I sing," he said, bowing his head. Then he stood up and looked at his companions, and struck the key-note, when every one joined their voices with his in the wonderful little hymn:

So noble a Lord
None serves in vain;
For the pay of my love
Is my love's sweet pain.

In the place of caresses
Thou givest me woes;
I kiss Thy hands,
When I feel their blows.

For in Thy chastening,
Is joy and peace;
O Master and Lord!
Let thy blows not cease.

I die with longing
Thy face to see;
And sweet is the anguish
Of death to me,

For, because Thou lovest me,
Lover of mine!
Death can but make me
Utterly Thine!

The doctor was the first to speak after the sweet triumph of the notes had died away. "Many a soul I have seen pass whispering those verses," he said; "men and women, and little children."

"The good Marcela in heaven has that for her joy," answered Luis.

Lopez rose while the holy influence still lingered. He kissed the hands of every one, and held the doctor's in his own until they reached the threshold. A more than usual farewell took place there, though there were only a few whispered words.

"Farewell, Lopez! I can trust you?"

"Unto death."

"If we never meet again?"

"Still it will be *farewell.* Thou art in God's care."

Very slowly the doctor sauntered back to the parlor, like a man who has a heavy duty to do and hardly knows how to begin it. "But I will tell Maria first," he whispered; and then

he opened the door, and saw the Señora bidding her children good-night.

"What a happy time we have had!" she was saying. "I shall never forget it. Indeed, my dears, you see how satisfactory it is to be religious. When we talk of the saints and angels, they come round us to listen to what we say; accordingly, we are full of peace and pleasure. I know that because I heard Fray—I heard a very good man say so."

She smiled happily at her husband, as she took his arm, and twice, as they went slowly upstairs together, she lifted her face for his kiss. Her gentleness and affection made it hard for him to speak; but there were words to be said that could be no longer delayed; and when he had closed the room door, he took her hands in his, and looked into her face with eyes that told her all.

"You are going away, Roberto," she whispered.

"My love! Yes! To-night—this very hour I must go! Luis and Dare also. Do not weep, I entreat you! My heart is heavy, and your tears I cannot bear."

Then she answered, with a noble composure:

"I will give you smiles and kisses. My good Roberto, so true and kind! I will try to be worthy of you. Nay, but you must not weep —Roberto!"

It was true. Quite unconsciously the troubled husband and father was weeping. "I fear to leave you, dear Maria. All is so uncertain. I can only ask you two favors; if you will grant them, you will do all that can be done to send me away with hope. Will you promise me to have nothing to do whatever with Fray Ignatius; and to resist every attempt he may make to induce you to go into a religious house of any kind?"

"I promise you, Roberto. By my mother's cross, I promise you!"

"Again, dear Maria, if you should be in any danger, promise me that you will do as Antonia and Lopez Navarro think it wisest and best."

"Go with God, my husband. Go with God, in a good hour. All you wish, I will do."

He held her to his heart and kissed her, and she whispered amid her tender farewells to himself, messages to her sons—but especially to Juan. "Will you see Juan? If you do, tell him I repent. I send him a thousand bless-

ings! Ah, the dear one! Kiss him for me, Roberto! Tell him how much I love him, Roberto! How I sorrow because I was cross to him! My precious one? My good son, who always loved me so dearly!"

At length Isabel came in to weep in her mother's arms. "Luis is going away," she cried. The father felt a momentary keen pang of jealousy. "I am going also, queridita," he said mournfully. Then she threw her arms around his neck and bewailed her bad fortune. "If I were the Almighty God, I would not give love and then take it away," she murmured. "I would give orders that the good people should always be happy. I would not let men like Santa Anna live. He is a measureless monster, and ought to go to the d—to purgatory, at the very least."

While the Señora soothed her complaining, the doctor left. One troubled glance of a great love he cast backward from the door ere he closed it behind him; and then his countenance suddenly changed. Stern and strong it grew, with a glow of anger in the steel-blue eyes that gave an entirely new character to it.

He called Antonia into his study, and talked

with her of the crisis which was approaching, and of the conduct of their affairs in it. He showed her the places in which his gold coin was hidden. He told her on whom to rely in any emergency.

"We have sure information that General Urrea, with the vanguard of a large Mexican army, will be here next month. Santa Anna will follow him quickly. You see that the city must either be defended or our men must retreat. I am going to Houston with this dilemma. Luis and Dare will join Fannin at Goliad. Now, my dear child, you have my place to fill. If Santa Anna takes possession of San Antonio, what will you do?"

"If we are not disturbed in any way, I will keep very quiet within my own home."

"If Fray Ignatius attempts to interfere with you—what then?"

"I will fly from him, and take Isabel and mi madre with me."

"That is your only safety. I shall hear if the Americans desert the city; then I will send your brother Thomas, if by any possibility it can be done, to guard you to the eastern settlements. But I may not be able to do this—

there may be no time—it cannot be depended upon—Lopez Navarro will help you all he can, and Ortiz. You may always rely on Ortiz."

"My father, I cannot trust Ortiz. Every man is a master to a peon. He would mean to do kindly, but his cowardice might make him false."

"Ortiz is no peon. He is a Mexican officer of high rank, whom Santa Anna ordered to be shot. I saved his life. He wears the clothes of a peon—that is necessary; but he has the honor and gratitude of a gentleman beneath them. If necessary, trust Ortiz fully. One thing above all others remember—*Flight* before a convent."

"Flight! Yes, death before it! I promise you, father. When we meet again, you shall say, well done, Antonia.'

It was now about midnight. They went back to the parlor. Luis and Dare sat by the dying fire. They were bent forward, close together over it, talking in a low voice. They rose when the doctor spoke, and silently kissed Antonia.

"It will be a hard ride, now," said the doctor, and Dare answered, mechanically, "but we

shall manage it." He held Antonia's hand, and she went with them to the rear of the house. Their horses were standing ready saddled. Silently the men mounted. In a moment they had passed the gate, and the beat of their horses' hoofs gradually died away.

But all through the clear spaces of the sky the Christmas bells were ringing, and the serenaders were musically telling each other,

"At twelve will the Child be born!"

## CHAPTER XII.

### DANGER AND HELP.

"A curious creed they weave,
And, for the Church commands it,
All men must needs believe,
Though no man understands it.
God loves his few pet lambs,
And saves his one pet nation;
The rest he largely damns,
With swinging reprobation."

"The Church may loose and bind;
But Mind, immortal Mind,
As free as wave or wind,
Came forth, O God, from Thee."

—BLACKIE.

DR. WORTH had set his daughter a task of no light magnitude. It was true, that Rachela and Fray Ignatius could no longer disturb the household by their actual presence, but their power to cause unhappiness was not destroyed. Among the Mexican families loyal to Santa Anna the dismission of the priest and the duenna had been a source of much indignant gossip; for Rachela was one of those

women who cry out when they are hurt, and compel others to share their trouble. The priest had not therefore found it necessary to explain *why* the Señora had called upon a new confessor. He could be silent, and possess his dignity in uncomplaining patience, for Rachela paraded his wrongs as a kind of set-off to her own.

Such piety! Such virtues! And the outrageous conduct of the Señor Doctor! To be sure there was cause for anger at the Señorita Antonia. Oh, yes! She could crow her mind abroad! There were books—Oh, infamous books! Books not proper to be read, and the Señorita had them! Well then, if the father burned them, that was a good deed done. And he had almost been reviled for it—sent out of the house—yes, it was quite possible that he had been struck! Anything was possible from those American heretics. As for her own treatment, after twenty years service, it had been cruel, abominable, more than that—iniquitous; but about these things she had spoken, and the day of atonement would come. Justice was informing itself on the whole matter.

Such conversations continually diversified, extended, repeated on all hands, quickly aroused a prejudice against the doctor's family. Besides which, the Señora Alveda resented bitterly the visits of her son Luis to Isabel. None of the customs of a Mexican betrothal had taken place, and Rachela did not spare her imagination in describing the scandalous American familiarity that had been permitted. That this familiarity had taken place under the eyes of the doctor and the Señora only intensified the insult. She might have forgiven clandestine meetings; but that the formalities due to the Church and herself should have been neglected was indeed unpardonable.

It soon became evident to the Señora that she had lost the good-will of her old friends, and the respect that had always been given to her social position. It was difficult for her to believe this, and she only accepted the humiliating fact after a variety of those small insults which women reserve for their own sex.

She was fond of visiting; she valued the good opinion of her caste, and in the very chill of the gravest calamities she worried her

strength away over little grievances lying outside the walls of her home and the real affections of her life. And perhaps with perfect truth she asserted that *she* had done nothing to deserve this social ostracism. Others had made her miserable, but she could thank the saints none could make her guilty.

The defeat of Cos had been taken by the loyal inhabitants as a mere preliminary to the real fight. They were very little disturbed by it. It was the overt act which was necessary to convince Mexico that her clemency to Americans was a mistake, and that the ungrateful and impious race must be wiped out of existence. The newspapers not only reiterated this necessity, but proclaimed its certainty. They heralded the coming of Santa Anna, the victorious avenger, with passionate gasconading. It was a mere question of a few days or weeks, and in the meantime the people of San Antonio were "making a little profit and pleasure to themselves out of the extravagant reprobates." There was not a day in which they did not anticipate their revenge in local military displays, in dances and illumi-

nations, in bull-fights, and in splendid religious processions.

And Antonia found it impossible to combat this influence. It was in the house as certain flavors were in certain foods, or as heat was in fire. She saw it in the faces of her servants, and felt it in their indifference to their duty. Every hour she watched more anxiously for some messenger from her father. And as day after day went by in a hopeless sameness of grief, she grew more restless under the continual small trials that encompassed her.

Towards the end of January, General Urrea, at the head of the vanguard of the Mexican army, entered Texas. His destination was La Bahia or Goliad, a strong fortress garrisoned by Americans under Colonel Fanning. Santa Anna was to leave in eight days after him. With an army of twenty thousand men he was coming to the relief of San Antonio.

The news filled the city with the wildest rejoicing. The little bells of the processions, the big bells of the churches, the firing of cannon, the hurrahs of the tumultuous people, made an uproar which reached the three

lonely women through the closed windows of their rooms.

"If only Lopez Navarro would come! If he would send us some little message! Holy Mary, even he has forgotten us!" cried the Señora in a paroxysm of upbraiding sorrow.

At that moment the door opened, and Fray Ignatius passed the threshold with lifted hands and a muttered blessing. He approached the Señora, and she fell on her knees and kissed the hand with which he crossed her.

"Holy father!" she cried, "the angels sent you to a despairing woman."

"My daughter, I have guided you since your first communion; how then could I forget you? Your husband has deserted you—you, the helpless, tender lamb, whom he swore to cherish; but the blessed fold of your church stands open. Come, poor weary one, to its shelter."

"My father—"

"Listen to me! The Mexican troops are soon to arrive. Vengeance without mercy is to be dealt out. You are the wife of an American rebel; I cannot promise you your life, or your honor, if you remain here. When

soldiers are drunk with blood, and women fall in their way, God have mercy upon them! I would shield even your rebellious daughter Antonia from such a fate. I open the doors of the convent to you all. There you will find safety and peace."

Isabel sat with white, parted lips and clasped hands, listening. Antonia had not moved or spoken. But with the last words the priest half-turned to her, and she came swiftly to her mother's side, and kissing her, whispered:

"Remember your promise to my father! Oh, mi madre, do not leave Isabel and me alone!"

"You, too, dear ones! We will all go together, till these dreadful days are past."

"No, no, no! Isabel and I will not go. We will die rather."

"The Señorita talks like a foolish one. Listen again! When Santa Anna comes for judgment, it will be swift and terrible. This house and estate will be forfeited. The faithful Church may hope righteously to obtain it. The sisters have long needed a good home. The convent will then come to you. You will have no shelter but the Church. Come to her

arms ere her entreaties are turned to commands."

"My husband told me—"

"Saints of God! you have no husband. He has forfeited every right to advise you. Consider that, daughter; and if you trust not my advice, there is yet living your honorable uncle, the Marquis de Gonzaga."

Antonia caught eagerly at this suggestion. It at least offered some delay, in which the Señora might be strengthened to resist the coercion of Fray Ignatius.

"Mother, it is a good thought. My great-uncle will tell you what to do; and my father will not blame you for following his advice. Perhaps even he may offer his home. You are the child of his sister."

Fray Ignatius walked towards the fire-place and stood rubbing slowly his long, thin hands before the blaze, while the Señora and her daughters discussed this proposal. The half-frantic mother was little inclined to make any further effort to resist the determined will of her old confessor; but the tears of Isabel won from her a promise to see her uncle.

"Then, my daughter, lose no time. I cannot

promise you many days in which choice will be left you. Go this afternoon, and to-morrow I will call for your decision."

It was not a visit that the Señora liked to make. She had deeply offended her uncle by her marriage, and their intercourse had since been of the most ceremonious and infrequent kind. But surely, at this hour, when she was left without any one to advise her steps, he would remember the tie of blood between them.

He received her with more kindness than she had anticipated. His eyes glittered in their deep sockets when she related her extremity and the priest's proposal, and his small shrunken body quivered with excitement as he answered:

"Saints and angels! Fray Ignatius is right about Santa Anna. We shall see that he will make caps for his soldiers out of the skins of these infidel ingrates. But as for going into the convent, I know not. A miserable marriage you made for yourself, Maria. Pardon, if I say so much! I let the word slip always. I was never one to bite my tongue. I am an old man—very well, come here, you and your

daughters, till the days of blood are over. There is room in the house, and a few comforts in it also. I have some power with Santa Anna. He is a great man—a great man! In all his wars, good fortune flies before him."

He kissed her hands as he opened the door, and then went back to the fire, and bent, muttering, over it: "Giver of good! a true Yturbide; a gentle woman; she is like my sister Mercedes—very like her. These poor women who trust me, as I am a sinner before God, I am unhappy to deceive them."

Fray Ignatius might have divined his thoughts, for he entered at the moment, and said as he approached him:

"You have done right. The soul must be saved, if all is lost. This is not a time for the friends of the Church and of Mexico to waver. The Church is insulted every day by these foreign heretics—"

"But you are mistaken, father; the Church holds up her head, whatever happens. Even the vice-regal crown is not lost—the Church has cleft it into mitres."

Fray Ignatius smiled, but there was a curious and crafty look of inquiry on his face.

"The city is turbulent, Marquis, and there is undoubtedly a great number of Mexicans opposed to Santa Anna."

"Do you not know Mexicans yet? They would be opposed to God Almighty, rather than confess they were well governed. Bah! the genius of Mexico is mutiny. They scarcely want a leader to move their madness. They rebel on any weak pretence. They bluster when they are courted; they crouch when they are oppressed. They are fools to all the world but themselves. I beg the Almighty to consider in my favor, that some over-hasty angel misplaced my lot. I should have been born in—New York."

The priest knew that he was talking for irritation, but he was too politic to favor the mood. He stood on the hearth with his hands folded behind him, and with a delightful suavity turned the conversation upon the country rather than the people. It was a glorious day in the dawn of spring. The tenderest greens, the softest blues, the freshest scents, the clearest air, the most delightful sunshine were everywhere. The white old town, with its picturesque crowds, its murmur of voices and

laughter, its echoes of fife and drum, its loves and its hatreds, was at his feet; and, far off, the hazy glory of the mountains, the greenness and freshness of Paradise, the peace and freedom of the vast, unplanted places. The old marquis was insensibly led to contemplate the whole; and, in so doing, to put uppermost that pride of country which was the base of every feeling susceptible to the priest's influence.

"Such a pleasant city, Marquis! Spanish monks founded it. Spanish and Mexican soldiers have defended it. Look at its fine churches and missions; its lovely homes, and blooming gardens."

"It is also all our own, father. It was but yesterday I said to one of those insolent Americans who was condescending to admire it: 'Very good, Señor; and, if you deign to believe me, it was not brought from New York. Such as you see it, it was made by ourselves here at San Antonio.' Saints in heaven! the fellow laughed in my face. We were mutually convinced of each other's stupidity."

"Ah, how they envy us the country! And you, Marquis, who have traveled over the world, you can imagine the reason?"

"Father, I will tell you the reason; it is the craving in the heart to find again the lost Eden. The Almighty made Texas with full hands. When He sets his heart on a man, he is permitted to live there."

"Grace of God! You speak the truth. Shall we then give up the gift of His hand to heretics and infidels?"

"I cannot imagine it."

"Then every one must do the work he can do. Some are to slay the unbelievers; others are to preserve the children of the Church. Your niece and her two daughters will be lost to the faith, unless you interfere for their salvation. Of you will their souls be required."

"By Saint Joseph, it is a duty not in agreement with my desire! I, who have carefully abstained from the charge of a wife and daughters of my own."

"It is but for a day or two, Marquis, until the matter is arranged. The convent is the best of all refuges for women so desolate."

The marquis did not answer. He lifted a book and began to read; and Fray Ignatius watched him furtively.

In the mean time the Señora had reached her

home. She was pleased with the result of her visit. A little kindness easily imposed upon this childlike woman, and she trusted in any one who was pleasant to her.

"You may believe me, Antonia," she said; "my uncle was in a temper most unusual. He kissed my hands. He offered me his protection. That is a great thing, I assure you. And your father cannot object to our removal there."

Antonia knew not what answer to make. Her heart misgave her. Why had Fray Ignatius made the proposal? She was sure it was part of an arrangement, and not a spontaneous suggestion of the moment. And she was equally sure that any preconcerted plan, having Fray Ignatius for its author, must be inimical to them.

Her mother's entry had not awakened Isabel, who lay asleep upon a sofa. The Señora was a little nettled at the circumstance. "She is a very child! A visit of such importance! And she is off to the land of dreams while I am fatiguing myself! I wish indeed that she had more consideration!" Then Antonia brought her chocolate, and, as she drank it and smoked her

cigarito, she chatted in an almost eager way about the persons she had seen.

"Going towards the Plaza, I met Judge Valdez. I stopped the carriage, and sent my affections to the Señora. Would you believe it? He answered me as if his mouth were full of snow. His disagreeable behavior was exactly copied by the Señora Silvestre and her daughter Esperanza. Doña Julia and Pilar de Calval did not even perceive me. Santa Maria! there are none so blind as those who won't see! Oh, indeed! I found the journey like the way of salvation—full of humiliations. I would have stopped at the store of the Jew Lavenburg, and ordered many things, but he turned in when he saw me coming. Once, indeed, he would have put his hat on the pavement for me to tread upon. But he has heard that your father has made a rebel of himself, and what can be expected? He knows when Santa Anna has done with the rebels not one of them will have anything left for God to rain upon. And there was a great crowd and a great tumult. I think the whole city had a brain fever."

At this moment Isabel began to moan in her

sleep as if her soul was in some intolerable terror or grief; and ere Antonia could reach her she sprang into the middle of the room with a shriek that rang through the house.

It was some minutes before the child could be soothed. She lay in her mother's arms, sobbing in speechless distress; but at length she was able to articulate her fright:

"Listen, mi madre, and may the Holy Lady make you believe me! I have had a dream. God be blessed that it is not yet true! I will tell you. It was about Fray Ignatius and our uncle the Marquis de Gonzaga. My good angel gave it to me; for myself and you all she gave it; and, as my blessed Lord lives! I will not go to them! *Si!* I will cut my white throat first!" and she drew her small hand with a passionate gesture across it. She had stood up as she began to speak, and the action, added to her unmistakable terror, her stricken face and air of determination, was very impressive.

"You have had a dream, my darling?"

"Yes, an awful dream, Antonia! Mary! Mary! Tender Mary, pity us!"

"And you think we should not go to the house of the marquis?"

"Oh, Antonia! I have seen the way. It is black and cold, and full of fear and pain. No one shall make me take it. I have the stiletto of my grandmother Flores. I will ask Holy Mary to pardon me, and then—in a moment—I would be among the people of the other world. That would be far better than Fray Ignatius and the house of Gonzaga."

The Señora was quite angry at this fresh complication. It was really incredible what she had to endure. And would Antonia please to tell her where else they were to go? They had not a friend left in San Antonio—they did not deserve to have one—and was it to be supposed that a lady, born noble, could follow the Americans in an ox-wagon? Antonia might think it preferable to the comfortable house of her relation; but blessed be the hand of God, which had opened the door of a respectable shelter to her.

"I will go in the ox-wagon," said Isabel, with a sullen determination; "but I will not go into my uncle's house. By the saint of my birth I swear it."

"Mother, listen to Antonia. When one door shuts, God opens another door. Our own home is yet undisturbed. Do you believe what Fray Ignatius says of the coming of Santa Anna? I do not. Until he arrives we are safe in our own home; and when the hour for going away comes, even a little bird can show us the way to take. And I am certain that my father is planning for our safety. If Santa Anna was in this city, and behaving with the brutality which is natural to him, I would not go away until my father sent the order. Do you think he forgets us? Be not afraid of such a thing. It cannot take place."

Towards dusk Señor Navarro called, and the Señora brought him into her private parlor and confided to him the strait they were in. He looked with sympathy into the troubled, tear-stained faces of these three helpless women; and listened with many expressive gestures to the proposal of the priest and the offer of the old marquis.

"Most excellent ladies," he answered; "it is a plot. I assure you that it is a plot. Certainly it was not without reason I was so unhappy about you this afternoon. Even

while I was at the bull-fight, I think our angels were in a consultation about your affairs. Your name was in my ears above all other sounds."

"You say it is a plot, Señor. Explain to us what you mean?"

"Yes, I will tell you. Do you know that Fray Ignatius is the confessor of the marquis?"

"We had not thought of such a thing."

"It is the truth. For many years they have been close as the skin and the flesh. Without Fray Ignatius the marquis says neither yes or no. Also the will of the marquis has been lately made. I have seen a copy of it. Everything he has is left to the brotherhoods of the Church. Without doubt, Fray Ignatius was the lawyer who wrote it."

"Señor, I always believed that would happen. At my marriage my uncle made the determination. Indeed, we have never expected a piastre—no, not even a tlaco. And to-day he was kind to me, and offered me his home. Oh, Holy Mother, how wretched I am! Can I not trust in the good words of those who are of my own family?"

"The tie of race will come before the tie of the family. The tie of religion is strongest of all, Señora. Let me tell you what will take place. When you and your children are in the house of the marquis, he will go before the Alcalde. He will declare that you have gone voluntarily to his care, and that he is your nearest and most natural guardian. Very well. But further, he will declare, on account of his great age, and the troubled state of the time, he is unable to protect you, and ask for the authority to place you in the religious care of the holy sisterhood of Saint Maria. And he will obtain all he wants."

"But, simply, what is to be gained by such treachery? He said to-day that I was like his sister Mercedes, and he spoke very gently to me."

"He would not think such a proceeding really unkind. He would assure himself that it was good for your eternal salvation. As to the reason, that is to be looked for in the purse, where all reasons come from. This house, which the good doctor built, is the best in the city. It has even two full stories. It is very suitable for a religious house. It is not far

from the Plaza, yet secluded in its beautiful garden. Fray Ignatius has long desired it. When he has removed you, possession will be taken, and Santa Anna will confirm the possession."

"God succor our poor souls! What shall we do then, Señor? The Mexican army has entered Texas, it will soon be here."

"Quien sabe? Between the Rio Grande and the San Antonio are many difficulties. Urrea has five thousand men with him, horses and artillery. The horses must graze, the men must rest and eat. We shall have heavy rains. I am sure that it will be twenty days ere he reaches the settlements; and even then his destination is not San Antonio, it is Goliad. Santa Anna will be at least ten days after him. I suppose, then, that for a whole month you are quite safe in your own home. That is what I believe now. If I saw a reason to believe what is different, I would inform you. The good doctor, to whom I owe my life many times, has my promise. Lopez Navarro never broke his word to any man. The infamy would be a thing impossible, where the safety of three ladies is concerned."

"And in a month, mi madre, what great things may happen! Thirty days of possibilities! Come, now, let us be a little happy, and listen to what the Señor has to tell us. I am sure this house has been as stupid as a convent"; and Isabel lifted the cigarette case of the Señora, and with kisses persuaded her to accept its tranquilizing consolation.

It was an elegant little golden trifle studded with gems. Her husband had given it to her on the anniversary of their twenty-fifth wedding day; and it recalled vividly to her the few sweet moments. She was swayed as easily as a child by the nearest or strongest influence, and, after all, it did seem the best to take Isabel's advice, and be a little happy while she could.

Lopez was delighted to humor this mood. He told them all the news of their own social set; and in such vivid times something happened every day. There had been betrothals and marriages, quarrels and entertainments; and Lopez, as a fashionable young man of wealth and nobility, had taken his share in what had transpired.

Antonia felt unspeakably grateful to him.

After the fretful terror and anxiety of the day—after the cruel visit of Fray Ignatius—it was indeed a comfort to hear the pleasant voice of Navarro in all kinds of cheerful modulations. By and by there was a slow rippling laugh from Isabel, and the Señora's face lost its air of dismal distraction.

At length Navarro had brought his narrative of small events down to the afternoon of that day. There had been a bull-fight, and Isabel was making him describe to her the chulos, in their pale satin breeches and silk waist-scarfs; the toreros in their scarlet mantles, and the picadores on their horses.

"And I assure you," he said, "the company of ladies was very great and splendid. They were in full dress, and the golden-pinned mantillas and the sea of waving fans were a sight indeed. Oh, the fans alone! So many colors; great crescents, growing and waning with far more enchantments than the moons. Their rustle and movement has a wonderful charm, Señorita Isabel; no one can imagine it.

"Oh, I assure you, Señor, I can see and feel it. But to be there! That, indeed, would make me perfectly happy."

"Had you been there to-day you would have admired, above all things, the feat of the matadore Jarocho. It was upon the great bull Sandoval—a very monster, I assure you. He came bellowing at Jarocho, as if he meant his instant death. His eyeballs were living fire; his nostrils steamed with fury; well, then, at the precise moment, Jarocho put his slippered feet between his horns, and vaulted, light as a bird flies, over his back. Then Sandoval turned to him again. Well, he calmly waited for his approach, and his long sword met him between the horns. As lightly as a lady touches her cavalier, he seemed to touch Sandoval; but the brute fell like a stone at his feet. What a storm of vivas! What clapping of hands and shouts of 'valiente!' And the ladies flung their flowers, and the men flung their hats into the arena, and Jarocho stepped proudly enough on them, I can tell you, though he was watching the door for the next bull."

"Ah, Señor, why will men fight each other, when it is so much more grand and interesting to fight bulls?"

"Señorita Isabel, if you could only convince

them of that! But then, it is not always interesting to the matadore; for instance, it is only by the mercy of God and the skill of an Americano that Jarocho is at this moment out of purgatory."

The Señora raised herself from among the satin pillows of her sofa, and asked, excitedly; "Was there then some accident, Señor? Is Jarocho wounded? Poor Jarocho!"

"Not a hair of his head is hurt, Señora. I will tell you. Saint Jago, who followed Sandoval, was a little devil. He was light and quick, and had intelligence. You could see by the gleam in his eyes that he took in the whole scene, and considered not only the people in the ring, but the people in the amphitheatre also, to be his tormentors. Perhaps in that reflection he was not mistaken. He meant mischief from the beginning; and he pressed Jarocho so close that he leaped the barrier for safety. As he leaped, Saint Jago leaped also. Imagine now the terror of the spectators! The screams! The rush! The lowered horns within an inch of Jarocho, and Fray Joseph Maria running with the consecrated wafer to the doomed man! At that precise moment there was a

rifle-shot, and the bellowing brute rolled backward into the arena—dead."

"Oh, Maria Purissima! How grand! In such moments one really lives, Señor. And but for this absurd rebellion I and my daughters could have had the emotion. It is indeed cruel."

"You said the shot was fired by an American?"

"Señorita Antonia, it was, indeed. I saw him. He was in the last row. He had stood up when Saint Jago came in, and he was watching the man and the animal with his soul in his eyes. He had a face, fine and thin as a woman's—a very gentle face, also. But at one instant it became stern and fierce, the lips hard set, the eyes half shut, then the rifle at the shoulder like a flash of light, and the bull was dead between the beginning and the end of the leap! The sight was wonderful, and the ladies turned to him with smiles and cries of thankfulness, and the better part of the men bowed to him; for the Mexican gentleman is always just to a great deed. But he went away as if he had done something that displeased himself, and when I overtook him at

the gates of the Alamo, he did not look as if he wished to talk about it.

"However, I could not refrain myself, and I said: 'Permit me, Colonel Crockett, to honor you. The great feat of to-day's fight was yours. San Antonio owes you for her favorite Jarocho.'

"'I saved a life, young man,' he answered; 'and I took a life; and I'll be blamed if I know whether I did right or wrong.' 'Jarocho would have been killed but for your shot.' 'That's so; and I killed the bull; but you can take my hat if I don't think I killed the tallest brute of the two. Adjourn the subject, sir'; and with that he walked off into the fort, and I did myself the pleasure of coming to see you, Señora."

He rose and bowed to the ladies, and, as the Señora was making some polite answer, the door of the room opened quickly, and a man entered and advanced towards her. Every eye was turned on him, but ere a word could be uttered he was kneeling at the Señora's side, and had taken her face in his hands, and was kissing it. In the dim light she knew him at once, and she cried out: "My Thomas! My

Thomas! My dear son! For three years I have not seen you."

He brought into the room with him an atmosphere of comfort and strength. Suddenly all fear and anxiety was lifted, and in Antonia's heart the reaction was so great that she sank into a chair and began to cry like a child. Her brother held her in his arms and soothed her with the promise of his presence and help. Then he said, cheerfully:

"Let me have some supper, Antonia. I am as hungry as a lobos wolf; and run away, Isabel, and help your sister, for I declare to you girls I shall eat everything in the house."

The homely duty was precisely what was needed to bring every one's feelings to their normal condition; and Thomas Worth sat chatting with his mother and Lopez of his father, and Jack, and Dare, and Luis, and the superficial events of the time, with that pleasant, matter-of-course manner which is by far the most effectual soother of troubled and unusual conditions.

In less than half an hour Antonia called her brother, and he and Lopez entered the dining-

room together. They came in as brothers might come, face answering face with sympathetic change and swiftness; but Antonia could not but notice the difference in the two men. Lopez was dressed in a suit of black velvet, trimmed with many small silver buttons. His sash was of crimson silk. His linen was richly embroidered; and his wide hat was almost covered with black velvet, and adorned with silver tags. It was a dress that set off admirably his dark, intelligent face.

Thomas Worth wore the usual frontier costume; a dark flannel shirt, a wide leather belt, buck-skin breeches, and leather boots covering his knees. He was very like his father in figure and face—darker, perhaps, and less handsome. But the gentleness and strength of his personal appearance attracted every one first, and invested all traits with their own distinctive charm.

And, oh! What a change was there in the the Señora's room. The poor lady cried a little for joy, and then went to sleep like a wearied child. Isabel and Antonia were too happy to sleep. They sat half through the night, talking softly of the danger they had been in.

Now that Thomas had come, they could say *had*. For he was a very Great-heart to them, and they could even contemplate the expected visit of Fray Ignatius without fear; yes, indeed, with something very like satisfaction.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE ARRIVAL OF SANTA ANNA.

"What thing thou doest, bravely do;
When Heaven's clear call hath found thee,
Follow — with fervid wheels pursue,
Though thousands bray around thee."

"Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed,
Which his aspiring rider seemed to know;
With slow but stately pace kept on his course;
You would have thought the very windows spoke,
So many greedy looks of young and old,
Through casements darted their desiring eyes
Upon his visage."

LEFT to themselves, the two men threw off like a mask the aspect of cheerfulness they had worn in the presence of the Señora. Thomas Worth ate heartily, for he had been without food since morning; but Navarro did not attempt to join his meal. He sat patiently waiting, his sombre eyes fixed upon the mental visions which circled in the enchanted incense of his cigarette.

Presently Thomas Worth turned toward the hearth, pushed the cedar logs on it to a focus,

and at their leaping blaze lighted the pipe which he took from his pocket. "Lopez," he said, "it strikes me that I am just in time to prevent some infamous plan of Fray Ignatius and my uncle Gonzaga."

"I should not have lost sight of the Señora and your sisters. I have watched them faithfully, though for many good reasons it has been best to appear indifferent. Will you now remain in San Antonio?"

"I have come with orders to Travis to blow up the Alamo, and fall back upon Houston, who is at Gonzales. But I do not think the men will permit him to do so."

"You have too many leaders. Also, they undervalue the Mexican soldiers. I assure you they do. They fought Spain for ten years; they do not want, then, the persistence of true valor. The Americans may die in the Alamo, but they cannot hold it against the thousands Santa Anna will bring with him."

"They will die, then. They have no thought of retreat, nor of any deed that argues fear. Every man relies on himself, as if in his hand the moment of victory lay."

"Every man will perish."

"They will not perish in vain. Defeat is only a spur to the American soldier. Every one makes him a better fighter. If Santa Anna massacres the men in the Alamo, he seals the freedom of Texas."

"Houston should have come himself."

"Houston is biding his time. He is doing at present the hardest duty a great man can do: setting an example of obedience to a divided and incompetent government. Lopez, you said rightly that we had too many leaders. When those appointed for sacrifice have been offered up—when we are in the extremity of danger and ruin, then Houston will hear the word he is waiting for."

"And he will lead you on to victory. Indeed, I know it. I have seen him. He has the line—the fortunate line on the forehead. He is the loadstone in the breast of your cause; the magnet who can draw good fortune to it. If fate be against you, he will force fate to change her mind. If fate weave you a common thread, he will change it into purple. Victory, which she gives to others reluctantly, he will take like a master from her hand! HOUSTON! What essence! What exist-

ence! What honor! What hope there is in those seven letters. Consider this: He will find a way or make a way for freedom."

Subsequent events proved the opinion of Thomas Worth correct with regard to the garrison in the Alamo. David Crockett! James Bowie! Barret Travis! The names were a host in themselves; one and all refused to couple them with retreat.

"Military defeats may be moral victories, young man," said Crockett to Thomas Worth; "and moral victories make national greatness. The Roman that filled the gulf with his own body—the men who died at Thermopylæ—they live to-day, and they have been talking with us."

"But if you join Houston you will save many lives."

"That isn't always the point, sir. Jim Bowie was saying there was once a lover who used to swim two miles every night to see a young woman called Hero. Now, he might have waited for a boat and gone dry-shod to his sweetheart; but if he had, who would have cared whether he lived or died? The Alamo

is our Hero. If we can't keep her, we can die for her."

The same spirit moved every soul at Goliad. Fanning was there with nearly nine hundred men, and he had named the place Fort Defiance, and asserted his determination to hold it. In the mean time, Houston was using his great personal influence to collect troops, to make treaties with the Indians, and to keep together some semblance of a provisional government.

But it had become evident to all the leading spirits of the revolution that no half-way measures would now do. They only produced half-way enthusiasm. For this end, Houston spoke out with his accustomed boldness:

"Gentlemen, we must declare the independence of Texas, and like our fore-elders, sink or swim by that declaration. Nothing else, nothing less, can save us. The planters of Texas must feel that they are fighting for their own constitution, and not for Mexican promises made to them twelve years ago and never yet kept."

The simple proposition roused a new enthusiasm; for while Urrea was hastening to-

wards Goliad, and Santa Anna towards San Antonio, and Filisola to Washington, the divided people were becoming more and more embittered. The American soldiers, who had hitherto gone in and out among the citizens of San Antonio during the day, and only slept in the Alamo, were conscious of an ominous change in the temper of the city. They gathered their recruits together and shut themselves in the fortress.

Again Thomas Worth urged them to fall back either upon the line of Houston at Gonzales, or Fanning at Goliad; but in the indecision and uncertainty of all official orders, Crockett thought it best to make the first stand at the Mexican city.

"We can, at least," he said, "keep Santa Anna busy long enough to give the women and children of our own settlements time to escape, and the men time to draw together with a certain purpose."

"The cry of Santa Anna has been like the cry of wolf! wolf!" said Bowie. "I hear that great numbers that were under arms have gone home to plant their corn and cotton. Do you want Santa Anna to murder them piecemeal—

house by house, family by family? Great George! Which of us would accommodate him with a prolonged pleasure like that? No! he shall have a square fight for every life he gets"; and the calm, gentlemanly Bowie was suddenly transformed into a flashing, vehement, furious avenger. He laid his knife and pistols on the table, his steel-blue eyes scintillated as if they were lightning; his handsome mouth, his long, white hands, his whole person radiated wrath and expressed the utmost lengths of invincible courage and insatiable hatred.

"Gentlemen," answered Travis, "I go with Crockett and Bowie. If we hold the Alamo, it is a deed well done. If we fall with it, it is still a deed well done. We shall have given to Houston and Fanning time to interpose themselves between Santa Anna and the settlements."

"We have none of us lived very well," said Bowie, "but we can die well. I say as an American, that Texas is ours by right of natural locality, and by right of treaty; and, as I live, I will do my best to make it American by right of conquest! Comrades, I do not want a prettier quarrel to die in"—and looking

with a brave, unflinching gaze around the grim fortress—"I do not want a better monument than the Alamo!"

The speech was not answered with any noisy hurrahing; but the men around the bare, long table clasped hands across it, and from that last interview with the doomed men Thomas Worth came away with the knowledge that he had seen the battle begun. He felt now that there was no time to delay longer his plans for the safety of his mother and sisters. These were, indeed, of the simplest and most uncertain character; for the condition of the country and its few resources were such as to make flight the only way that promised safety. And yet flight was environed with dangers of every kind—hunger, thirst, exhaustion, savage beasts, Indians, and the triple armies of Mexico.

The day after his arrival he had begun to prepare, as far as possible, for this last emergency, but the Señora's unconquerable aversion to leave her native city had constantly hampered him. Until Santa Anna really appeared she would not believe in the necessity of such a movement. The proposal of Fray Ignatius,

even if it did end in a convent, did not seem so terrible as to be a wanderer without a roof to cover her. She felt aggrieved and injured by Antonia's and Isabel's positive refusal to accept sanctuary from the priest, and with the underhand cunning of a weak woman she had contrived to let Fray Ignatius know that *she* was not to blame for the refusal.

All the same the priest hated her in conjunction with her children. On the morning after her interview with her uncle, he went to receive her submission ; for the marquis had informed him of all that had passed, and he felt the three women and the valuable Worth property already under his hard hand. He opened the gate with the air of a proprietor. He looked down the lovely alleys of the garden, and up at the latticed stories of the handsome house, with that solid satisfaction which is the reward of what is acquired by personal effort or wisdom.

When he entered the door and was confronted by Thomas Worth, he was for the moment nonplussed. But he did not permit his confusion and disappointment to appear. He had not seen Thomas for a long time. He

addressed him with suavity and regrets, and yet, "was sure he would be glad to hear that, in the present dangerous crisis, the Marquis de Gonzaga had remembered the blood-tie and offered his protection to a family so desolate."

Thomas Worth leaned upon the balusters, as if guarding the approach to the Señora's apartments. He answered: "The protection of the marquis is unnecessary. Three ladies are too great a charge for one so aged. We will not impose it." The face of the young man was calm and stern, but he spoke without visible temper, until the priest prepared to pass him. Then he stretched out his arm as a barrier.

"Fray Ignatius, you have already passed beyond the threshold; permit me to remind you of Dr. Worth's words on that subject."

"I put my duty before any man's words."

"Sir, for my mother's sake, I would not be disrespectful; but I assure you, also, that I will not permit any man, while I live, to disregard my father's orders regarding his own household."

"I must see the Señora."

"That, I reply, is impossible."

"Presume not—dare not to interfere with a

priest in the duty of his office. It is a mortal sin. The curse of the Church will rest upon you."

"The curse of the Church will not trouble me. But to treat my father's known wishes with contempt—that is an act of dishonor and disobedience which I will not be guilty of."

"Santa Maria! Suffer not my spirit to be moved by this wicked one. Out of my path, Satanas!"

The last word was not one which Thomas Worth had expected. He flushed crimson at its application, and with a few muttered sentences, intelligible only to the priest, he took him firmly by the shoulder, led him outside the door, and closed and barred it.

The expulsion was not accomplished without noisy opposition on the part of Fray Ignatius, and it pained Thomas deeply to hear, in the midst of the priest's anathemas, the shrill cries of his mother's distress and disapproval.

The next domestic movement of Thomas Worth was to rid the house of Molly and Manuel, and the inferior servants. It was not as easy a task as may be supposed. They had been ordered by Fray Ignatius to remain, and

the order had not been countermanded. Even if the Señora and her daughters were going east, and their services were not needed, they had no objections to remain in the Worth house. They understood that the Church would take possession, and the housekeeping of the Church was notoriously easy and luxurious.

However, after exorbitant compensation had been made, and Molly had given in return "a bit of her mind," she left for the Irish colony of San Patricio, and Manuel immediately sought his favorite monte table. When he had doubled his money, he intended to obey Molly's emphatic orders, and go and tell the priest all about it.

"I would rather face a battery of cannon than Fray Ignatius and the servants again, Antonia." Antonia looked at her brother; he was worried and weary, and his first action, when he had finally cleared the house, was to walk around it, and bolt every door and window. Antonia followed him silently. She perceived that the crisis had come, and she was doing as good women in extremity do—trying to find in the darkness the hand always stretched out

to guide and strengthen. As yet she had not been able to grasp it. She followed her brother like one in a troubled dream, whispering faintly, with white lips, "O God, where art Thou? Help and pity us!"

Thomas led her finally to his father's office. He went to a closet filled with drugs, removed them, and then a certain pressure of his hand caused the back of the closet to disappear in a groove, and a receptacle full of coin and papers was disclosed.

"We must take with us all the coin we can carry. What you are not likely to require, is to go to the men in the field. Then, hide in its place the old silver, and the laces, and the jewels, which came with the Flores from Castile; and any other papers and valuables, which you received from our father. I think even Fray Ignatius will not discover them here."

"Is there any special need to hurry to-day?"

"Santa Anna is within forty-eight hours of San Antonio. He may force a march, and be here earlier. Travis told me last night that their advance scouts had come in with this intelligence. To-day they will gather every man they can, and prepare to defend them-

selves in the Alamo. As soon as Santa Anna arrives, we are in danger. I must leave here to-night. I must either take you with me or remove you to a place of more safety."

"Let us go with you."

"If my mother is willing."

"If she is not, what then?"

"Lopez has prepared for that emergency. He has an empty house three miles west of San Antonio. He has had it completely victualled. I will take you there after dark in the large green chariot. Ortiz will drive the light Jersey wagon on the Gonzales road. When inquiry is made, the Jersey wagon will have attracted the attention of every Mexican, and Fray Ignatius will receive positive assurances that you were in it and are beyond his power. And certainly, without definite intelligence, he would never suspect you of being anywhere on the highway to Mexico."

"Shall we be quite alone?"

"For two or three days you will be quite alone. Ortiz will, however, return with the wagon by a circuitous route; for, sooner or later, you are sure to need it. Fear not to trust him. Only in one respect will you need to

supplement his advice by your own intelligence: he is so eager to fight Santa Anna, he may persuade himself and you that it is necessary to fly eastward when it is not. In all other points you may be guided by him, and his disguise as a peon is so perfect that it will be easy for him to gather in the pulquerias all the information requisite for your direction. I have been out to the house, and I can assure you that Lopez has considered everything for your comfort."

"However, I would rather go with you, Thomas."

"It must be as mother desires."

When the circumstances were explained to the Señora, she was at first very determined to accept neither alternative. "She would remain where she was. She was a Flores and a Gonzaga. Santa Anna knew better than to molest her. She would rather trust to him than to those dreadful Americans." Reminded of Fray Ignatius, she shed a few tears over the poor padrecito, and assured her children they had made a mistake regarding him, which neither oil nor ointment, nor wit nor wisdom, could get over.

It was almost impossible to induce her to come to a decision of any kind; and only when she saw Antonia and Isabel were dressed for a journey, and that Thomas had locked up all the rooms and was extinguishing the fires, could she bring herself to believe that the trial so long anticipated had really come.

"My dearest mother! My own life and the lives of many others may now hang upon a few moments. I can remain here no longer. Where shall I take you to?"

"I will not leave my home."

"Santa Anna is almost here. As soon as he arrives, Fray Ignatius and twelve of the Bernardine monks are coming here. I was told that yesterday."

"Then I will go to the convent. I and my daughters."

"No, mother; if you go to the convent, Antonia and Isabel must go with me."

She prayed, and exclaimed, and appealed to saints and angels, and to the holy Virgin, until Isabel was hysterically weeping, Antonia at a mental tension almost unendurable, and Thomas on the verge of one of those terrifying

passions that mark the extremity of habitually gentle, patient men.

"My God, mother!" he exclaimed with a stamp of his spurred boot on the stone floor; "if you will go to the devil—to the priests, I mean—you must go alone. Kiss your mother farewell, girls. I have not another moment to wait."

Then, in a passion of angry sobs and reproaches, she decided to go with her daughters, and no saint ever suffered with a more firm conviction of their martyrdom to duty than did this poor foolish, affectionate slave to her emotions and her superstitions. But when Thomas had gone, and nothing was to be gained by a display of her sufferings, she permitted herself to be interested in their hiding-place, and after Antonia had given her a cup of chocolate, and Isabel had petted and soothed her, she began gradually to allow them to explain their situation, and even to feel some interest in its discussion.

They sat in the charmful, dusky glimmer of starlight, for candles and fire were forbidden luxuries. Fortunately, the weather was warm and sunny, and for making chocolate and such

simple cookery, Lopez had provided a spirit lamp. The Señora was as pleased as a child with this arrangement. She had never seen anything like it before. She even imagined the food cooked upon it had some rare and unusual flavor. She was quite proud when she had learned its mysteries, and quite sure that chocolate she made upon it was chocolate of a most superior kind.

The house had been empty for two years, and the great point was to preserve its air of desolation. No outside arrangement was touched; the torn remnants of some balcony hangings were left fluttering in the wind; the closed windows and the closed doors, the absence of smoke from the chimneys and of lights from the windows, preserved the air of emptiness and loneliness that the passers-by had been accustomed to see. And, as it was on the highway into the city, there were great numbers of passers: mule-trains going to Mexico and Sonora; cavaliers and pedestrians; splendidly-dressed nobles and officials, dusty peons bringing in wood; ranchmen, peddlers, and the whole long list of a great city's purveyors and servants.

But though some of the blinds were half-closed, much could be seen; and Isabel also often took cushions upon the flat roof, and lying down, watched, from between the pilasters of the balustrade surrounding it, the moving panorama.

On the morning of the third day of what the Señora called their imprisonment, they went to the roof to sit in the clear sunshine and the fresh wind. They were weary and depressed with the loneliness and uncertainty of their position, and were almost longing for something to happen that would push forward the lagging wheels of destiny.

A long fanfare of trumpets, a roll of drums, a stirring march of warlike melody, startled them out of the lethargic tedium of exhausted hopes and fears. "It is Santa Anna!" said Antonia; and though they durst not stand up, they drew closer to the balustrade and watched for the approaching army. Is there any woman who can resist that nameless emotion which both fires and rends the heart in the presence of great military movements? Antonia was still and speechless, and white as death. Isabel watched with gleaming

eyes and set lips. The Señora's excitement was unmistakably that of exultant national pride.

Santa Anna and his staff-officers were in front. They passed too rapidly for individual notice, but it was a grand moving picture of handsome men in scarlet and gold—of graceful mangas and waving plumes, and bright-colored velvet capes; of high-mettled horses, and richly-adorned Mexican saddles, aqueras of black fur, and silver stirrups; of thousands of common soldiers, in a fine uniform of red and blue; with antique brazen helmets gleaming in the sun, and long lances, adorned with tri-colored streamers. They went past like a vivid, wonderful dream—like the vision of an army of mediæval knights.

In a few minutes the tumult of the advancing army was increased tenfold by the clamor of the city pouring out to meet it. The clashing bells from the steeples, the shouting of the populace, the blare of trumpets and roll of drums, the lines of churchmen and officials in their grandest dresses, of citizens of every age, —the indescribable human murmur—altogether it was a scene whose sensuous splendor

obliterated for a time the capacity of impressionable natures to judge rightly.

But Antonia saw beyond all this brave show the ridges of red war, and a noble perversity of soul made her turn her senses inward. Then her eyes grew dim, and her heart rose in pitying prayer for that small band of heroes standing together for life and liberty in the grim Alamo. No pomp of war was theirs. They were isolated from all their fellows. They were surrounded by their enemies. No word of sympathy could reach them. Yet she knew they would stand like lions at bay; that they would give life to its last drop for liberty; and rather than be less than freemen, they would prefer not to be at all.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE FALL OF THE ALAMO.

"The combat deepens. On, ye brave!
Who rush to glory or the grave."

"To all the sensual world proclaim:
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name."

"Gashed with honorable scars,
Low in Glory's lap they lie;
Though they fell, they fell like stars,
Streaming splendor through the sky."

THE passing-by of Santa Anna and the Mexican army, though it had been hourly expected for nearly three days, was an event which threw the Señora and her daughters into various conditions of mental excitement. They descended from the roof to the Señora's room, where they could move about and converse with more freedom. For the poor lady was quite unable to control her speech and actions, and was also much irritated by Antonia's more composed manner. She thought it was want of sympathy.

"How can you take things with such a blessed calmness," she asked, angrily. "But it is the way of the Americans, no doubt, who must have everything for prudence. Sensible! Sensible! Sensible! that is the tune they are forever playing, and you dance to it like a miracle."

"My dear mother, can we do any good by exclaiming and weeping?"

"Holy Virgin! Perhaps not; but to have a little human nature is more agreeable to those who are yet on the earth side of purgatory."

"Mi madre," said Isabel, "Antonia is our good angel. She thinks for us, and plans for us, and even now has everything ready for us to move at a moment's notice. Our good angels have to be sensible and prudent, madre."

"To move at a moment's notice! Virgin of Guadalupe! where shall we go to? Could my blessed father and mother see me in this prison, this very vault, I assure you they would be unhappy even among the angels."

"Mother, there are hundreds of women to-day in Texas who would think this house a palace of comfort and safety."

"Saints and angels! Is that my fault? Does it make my condition more endurable? Ah, my children, I have seen great armies come into San Antonio, and always before I have been able to make a little pleasure to myself out of the event. For the Mexicans are not blood-thirsty, though they are very war-like. When Bravo was here, what balls, what bull-fights, what visiting among the ladies! Indeed there was so much to tell, the tertulia was as necessary as the dinner. To be sure, the Mexicans are not barbarians; they made a war that had some refinement. But the Americans! They are savages. With them it is fight, fight, fight, and if we try to be agreeable, as we were to that outrageous Sam Houston, they say thank you, madam, and go on thinking their own cruel thoughts. I wonder the gentle God permits that such men live."

"Dear mother, refinement in war is not possible. Nothing can make it otherwise than brutal and bloody."

"Antonia, allow that I, who am your mother, should know what I have simply seen with my eyes. Salcedo, Bravo, Martinez,

Urrea—are they not great soldiers? Very well, then, I say they brought some pleasure with their armies; and you will see that Santa Anna will do the same. If we were only in our own home! It must have been the devil who made us leave it."

"How truly splendid the officers looked, mi madre. I dare say Señora Valdez will entertain them."

"That is certain. And as for Dorette Valdez—the coquette—it will certainly be a great happiness to her."

Isabel sighed, and the Señora felt a kind of satisfaction in the sigh. It was unendurable to be alone in her regrets and her longings.

"Yes," she continued, "every night Señora Trespalacios will give a tertulia, and the officers will have military balls—the brave young men; they will be so gay, so charming, so devoted, and in a few hours, perhaps, they will go into the other world by the road of the battlefield. Ah, how pitiful! How interesting! Cannot you imagine it?"

Isabel sighed again, but the sigh was for the gay, the charming Luis Alveda. And when she

thought of him, she forgot in a moment to envy Dorette Valdez, or the señoritas of the noble house of Trespalacios. And some sudden, swift touch of sympathy, strong as it was occult, made the Señora at the same moment remember her husband and her sons. A real sorrow and a real anxiety drove out all smaller annoyances. Then both her daughters wept together, until their community of grief had brought to each heart the solemn strength of a divine hope and reliance.

"My children, I will go now and pray," said the sorrowful wife and mother. "At the foot of the cross I will wait for the hour of deliverance"; and casting herself on her knees, with her crucifix in her hand, she appeared in a moment to have forgotten everything but her anguish and her sins, and the Lamb of God upon whom, with childlike faith, she was endeavoring to cast them. Her tears dropped upon the ivory image of the Crucified, and sympathetic tears sprung into Antonia's and Isabel's eyes, as they listened to her imploration.

That night, when all was dark and still, Ortiz returned with the wagon. In the morning An-

tonia went to speak to him. He looked worn-out and sorrowful, and she feared to ask him for news. "There is food in the house, and I have made you chocolate," she said, as she pitifully scanned the man's exhausted condition.

"The Señorita is kind as the angels. I will eat and drink at her order. I am, indeed, faint and hungry."

She brought him to the table, and when he refused to sit in her presence, she said frankly, "Captain Ortiz, you are our friend and not our servant. Rest and refresh yourself."

He bent upon one knee and kissed the hand she offered, and without further remonstrance obeyed her desire. Isabel came in shortly, and with the tact of true kindness she made no remark, but simply took the chair beside Ortiz, and said, in her usual voice and manner: "Good morning, Captain. We are glad to see you. Did you meet my brother Thomas again?"

"Señorita, God be with you! I have not seen him. I was at Goliad."

"Then you would see our brother Juan?"

"Si. The Señor Juan is in good health and

great happiness. He sent by my willing hands a letter."

"Perhaps also you saw his friend, Señor Grant?"

"From him, also, I received a letter. Into your gracious care, Señorita, I deliver them."

"I thank you for your kindness, Captain. Tell us now of the fortress. Are the troops in good spirits?"

"Allow me to fear that they are in too good assurance of success. The most of the men are very young. They have not yet met our Lady of Sorrows. They have promised to themselves the independence of Texas. They will also conquer Mexico. There are kingdoms in the moon for them. I envy such exaltations—and regret them. *Grace of God*, Señorita! My heart ached to see the crowds of bright young faces. With a Napoleon—with a Washington to lead them—they would do miracles."

"What say you to Houston?"

"I know him not. At Goliad they are all Houstons. They believe each man in himself. On the contrary, I wish that each man looked to the same leader."

"Do you know that Santa Anna is in San Antonio?"

"I felt it, though I had no certain news. I came far around, and hid myself from all passers-by, for the sake of the wagon and the horses. I have the happiness to say they are safe. The wagon is within the enclosure, the horses are on the prairie. They have been well trained, and will come to my call. As for me, I will now go into the city, for there will be much to see and to hear that may be important to us. Señoritas, for all your desires, I am at your service."

When Ortiz was gone, Isabel had a little fret of disappointment. Luis might have found some messenger to bring her a word of his love and life. What was love worth that did not annihilate impossibilities! However, it consoled her a little to carry Jack's letter to his mother. The Señora had taken her morning chocolate and fallen asleep. When Isabel awakened her, she opened her eyes with a sigh, and a look of hopeless misery. These pallid depressions attacked her most cruelly in the morning, when the room, shabby and unfamiliar, gave both her memory and anticipation a shock.

But the sight of the letter flushed her face with expectation. She took it with smiles. She covered it with kisses. When she opened it, a curl from Jack's head fell on to her lap. She pressed it to her heart, and then rose and laid it at the feet of her Madonna. "She must share my joy," she said with a pathetic childishness; "she will understand it." Then, with her arm around Isabel, and the girl's head on his shoulder, they read together Jack's loving words:

"Mi madre, mi madre, you have Juan's heart in your heart. Believe me, that in all this trouble I sorrow only for you. When victory is won I shall fly to you. Other young men have other loves; I have only you, sweet mother. There is always the cry in my heart for the kiss I missed when I left you. If I could hold your hand to-night, if I could hear your voice, if I could lay my head on your breast, I would say that the Holy One had given me the best blessings He had in heaven. Send to me a letter, madre—a letter full of love and kisses. Forgive Juan! Think of this only: *he is my boy!* If I live, it is for you, who are the loveliest and dearest of

mothers. If I die, I shall die with your name on my lips. I embrace you with my soul. I kiss your hands, and remember how often they have clasped mine. I kiss your eyes, your cheeks, your dear lips. Mi madre, remember me! In your prayers, remember Juan!"

With what tears and sobs was this loving letter read by all the women; and the Señora finally laid it where she had laid the precious curl that had come with it. She wanted "the Woman blessed among women" to share the mother joy and the mother anguish in her heart. Besides, she was a little nervous about Jack's memento of himself. Her superstitious lore taught her that severed hair is a token of severed love. She wished he had not sent it, and yet she could not bear to have it out of her sight.

"Graciás á Dios!" she kept ejaculating. "I have one child that loves me, and me only. I shall forgive Juan everything. I shall not forgive Thomas many things. But Juan! oh! it is impossible not to love him entirely. There is no one like him in the world. If the good God will only give him back to me, I will say a prayer of thanks every day of my life

long. Oh, Juan! Juan! my boy! my dear one!"

Thus she talked to herself and her daughters continually. She wrote a letter full of motherly affection and loving incoherencies; and if Jack had ever received it he would doubtless have understood and kissed every word, and worn the white messenger close to his heart. But between writing letters and sending them, there were in those days intervals full of impossibilities. Love then had to be taken on trust. Rarely, indeed, could it send assurances of fidelity and affection.

Jack's letter brightened the day, and formed a new topic of conversation, until Ortiz returned in the evening. His disguise had enabled him to linger about the Plaza and monte table, and to hear and observe all that was going on.

"The city is enjoying itself, and making money," he said, in reply to question from the Señora. "Certainly the San Antonians approve of liberty, but what would you do? In Rome one does not quarrel with the Pope; in San Antonio one must approve of despotism, when Santa Anna parades himself there."

"Has he made any preparations for attacking the Alamo? Will the Americans resist him?"

"Señorita Antonia, he is erecting a battery on the river bank, three hundred yards from the Alamo. This morning, ere the ground was touched, he reviewed his men in the Plaza. He stood on an elevation at the church door, surrounded by his officers and the priests, and unfurled the Mexican flag."

"That was about eleven o'clock, Captain?"

"Si, Señorita. You are precisely exact."

"I heard at that hour a dull roar of human voices—a roar like nothing on earth but the distant roar of the ocean."

"To be sure; it was the shouting of the people. When all was still, Fray Ignatius blessed the flag, and sprinkled over it holy water. Then Santa Anna raised it to his lips and kissed it. Holy Maria! another shout. Then he crossed his sword upon the flag, and cried out—"Soldados! you are here to defend this banner, which is the emblem of your holy faith and of your native land, against heretics, infidels and ungrateful traitors. Do you swear to do it? And the whole army answered 'Si!

si! juramos!' (yes, we swear.) Again he kissed the flag, and laid his sword across it, and, to be sure, then another shout. It was a very clever thing, I assure you, Señora, and it sent every soldier to the battery with a great heart."

The Señora's easily touched feelings were all on fire at the description. "I wish I could have seen the blessing of the banner," she said; "it is a ceremony to fill the soul. I have always wept at it. Mark, Antonia! This confirms what I assured you of—the Mexicans make war with a religious feeling and a true refinement. And pray, Captain Ortiz, how will the Americans oppose these magnificent soldiers, full of piety and patriotism?"

"They have the Alamo, and one hundred and eighty-three men in it."

"And four thousand men against them?"

"Si. May the Virgin de los Remedios * be their help! An urgent appeal for assistance was sent to Fanning at Goliad. Señor Navarro took it on a horse fleet as the wind. You will see that on the third day he will be smoking in his balcony, in the way which is usual to him."

* The Virgin appealed to in military straits.

"Will Fanning answer the appeal?"

"If the answer be permitted him. But Urrea may prevent. Also other things."

Santa Anna entered San Antonio on Tuesday the twenty-third of February, 1836, and by the twenty-seventh the siege had become a very close one. Entrenched encampments encircled the doomed men in the Alamo, and from dawn to sunset the bombardment went on. The tumult of the fight—the hurrying in and out of the city—the clashing of church bells between the booming of cannon—these things the Señora and her daughters could hear and see; but all else was for twelve days mere surmise. But only one surmise was possible, when it was known that the little band of defiant heroes were fighting twenty times their own number—that no help could come to them—that the Mexicans were cutting off their water, and that their provisions were getting very low. The face of Ortiz grew constantly more gloomy, and yet there was something of triumph in his tone as he told the miserably anxious women with what desperate valor the Americans were fighting; and how fatally every one of their shots told.

On Saturday night, the fifth of March, he called Antonia aside, and said, "My Señorita, you have a great heart, and so I speak to you. The end is close. To-day the Mexicans succeeded in getting a large cannon within gunshot of the Alamo, just where it is weakest. Señor Captain Crockett has stood on the roof all day, and as the gunners have advanced to fire it he has shot them down. A group of Americans were around him; they loaded rifles and passed them to him quickly as he could fire them. Santa Anna was in a fury past believing. He swore then 'by every saint in heaven or hell' to enter the Alamo to-morrow. Señor Navarro says he is raging like a tiger, and that none of his officers dare approach him. The Señor bade me tell you that to-morrow night he will be here to escort you to Gonzales; for no American will his fury spare; he knows neither sex nor age in his passions. And when the Alamo falls, the soldiers will spread themselves around for plunder, or shelter, and this empty house is sure to attract them. The Señorita sees with her own intelligence how things must take place."

"I understand, Captain. Will you go with us?"

"I will have the Jersey wagon ready at midnight. I know the horses. Before sun-up we shall have made many miles."

That night as Antonia and her sister sat in the dark together, Antonia said: "Isabel, tomorrow the Alamo will fall. There is no hope for the poor, brave souls there. Then Santa Anna will kill every American."

"Oh, dear Antonia, what is to become of us? We shall have no home, nothing to eat, nowhere to sleep. I think we shall die. Also, there is mi madre. How I do pity her!"

"She is to be your care, Isabel. I shall rely on you to comfort and manage her. I will attend to all else. We are going to our father, and Thomas—and Luis."

"Yes, and after all I am very tired of this dreadful life. It is a kind of convent. One is buried alive here, and still not safe. Do you really imagine that Luis is with my father and Thomas?"

"I feel sure of it."

"What a great enjoyment it will be for me to see him again!"

"And how delighted he will be! And as it is necessary that we go, Isabel, we must make the best of the necessity. Try and get mi madre to feel this."

"I can do that with a few words, and tears, and kisses. Mi madre is like one's good angel—very easy to persuade."

"And now we must try and sleep, queridita."

"Are you sure there is no danger to-night, Antonia?"

"Not to-night. Say your prayer, and sleep in God's presence. There is yet nothing to fear. Ortiz and Lopez Navarro are watching every movement."

But at three o'clock in the morning, the quiet of their rest was broken by sharp bugle calls. The stars were yet in the sky, and all was so still that they thrilled the air like something unearthly. Antonia started up, and ran to the roof. Bugle was answering bugle; and their tones were imperative and cruel, as if they were blown by evil spirits. It was impossible to avoid the feeling that the call was a *predestined* summons, full of the notes of calamity. She was weighed down by this sorrowful presentiment, because, as yet, neither experience

nor years had taught her that *predestined ills are never lost.*

The unseen moving multitudes troubled the atmosphere between them. In wild, savage gusts, she heard the military bands playing the infamous Dequelo, whose notes of blood and fire commingled, shrieked in every ear—"*No Quarter! No Quarter!*" A prolonged shout, the booming of cannon, an awful murmurous tumult, a sense of horror, of crash and conflict, answered the merciless, frenzied notes, and drowned them in the shrieks and curses they called for.

It was yet scarcely dawn. Her soul, moved by influences so various and so awful, became almost rebellious. Why did God permit such cruelties? Did He know? Would He allow a handful of men to be overpowered by numbers? Being omnipotent, would He not in some way, at least, make the fight equal? The instinct of her anglo-American nature revolted at the unfairness of the struggle. Even her ejaculations to heaven were in this spirit. "It is so unjust," she murmured; "surely the Lord of Hosts will prevent a fight which must be a massacre."

As she went about the simple preparations for their breakfast, she wept continuously—tears of indignation and sorrow—tears coming from the strength of feeling, rather than its weakness. The Señora could eat nothing. Isabel was white with terror. They wandered from window to window in the last extremity of anxiety.

About seven o'clock they saw Ortiz pass the house. There were so many people on the road he could not find an opportunity to enter for some time. He had been in the city all night. He had watched the movement of the troops in the starlight. As he drank a cup of chocolate, he said:

"It was just three o'clock, Señorita, when the Matamoras battalion was moved forward. General Cos supported it with two thousand men."

"But General Cos was paroled by these same Americans who are now in the Alamo; and his life was spared on condition that he would not bear arms against them again."

"It is but one lie, one infamy more. When I left the city, about four thousand men were attacking the Alamo. The infantry, in col-

umns, were driven up to the walls by the cavalry which surrounded them."

"The Americans! Is there any hope for them?"

"The mercy of God remains, Señorita. That is all. The Alamo is not as the everlasting hills. What men have made, men can also destroy. Señor Navarro is in the church, praying for the souls that are passing every moment."

"He ought to have been fighting. To help the living is better than to pray for the dead."

"Permit me to assure you, Señorita Antonia, that no man has done more for the living. In time of war, there must be many kinds of soldiers. Señor Navarro has given nearly all that he possesses for the hope of freedom. He has done secret service of incalculable value."

"Secret service! I prefer those who have the courage of their convictions, and who stand by them publicly."

"This is to be considered, Señorita; the man who can be silent can also speak when the day for speaking arrives." No one opposed this statement. It did not seem worth while to discuss opinions, while the terrible facts

of the position were appealing to every sense.

As the day went on, the conflict evidently became closer and fiercer. Ortiz went back to the city, and the three lonely women knelt upon the house-top, listening in terror to the tumult of the battle. About noon the firing ceased, and an awful silence—a silence that made the ears ache to be relieved of it—followed.

"All is over!" moaned Antonia, and she covered her face with her hands and sobbed bitterly. Isabel had already exhausted tears. The Señora, with her crucifix in her hand, was praying for the poor unfortunates dying without prayer.

During the afternoon, smoke and flame, and strange and sickening odors were blown northward of the city, and for some time it seemed probable that a great conflagration would follow the battle. How they longed for some one to come! The utmost of their calamity would be better than the intolerable suspense. But hour after hour went past, and not even Ortiz arrived. They began to fear that both he and Navarro had been discovered in some

disloyalty and slain, and Antonia was heart-sick when she considered the helplessness of their situation.

Still, in accordance with Navarro's instructions, they dressed for the contemplated journey, and sat in the dark, anxiously listening for footsteps. About eleven o'clock Navarro and Ortiz came together. Ortiz went for the horses, and Navarro sat down beside the Señora. She asked him, in a low voice, what had taken place, and he answered:

"Everything dreadful, everything cruel, and monstrous, and inhuman! Among the angels in heaven there is sorrow and anger this night." His voice had in it all the pathos of tears, but tears mingled with a burning indignation.

"The Alamo has fallen!"

"Señorita Antonia, I would give my soul to undo this day's work. It is a disgrace to Mexico which centuries cannot wipe out."

"The Americans?"

"Are all with the Merciful One."

"Not one saved?"

"Not one."

"Impossible!"

"I will tell you. It is right to tell the whole world such an infamy. If I had little children I would take them on my knee and teach them the story. I heard it from the lips of one wet-shod with their blood, dripping crimson from the battle—my own cousin, Xavier. He was with General Castrillon's division. They began their attack at four in the morning, and after two hours' desperate fighting succeeded in reaching a courtyard of the Alamo.

"They found the windows and doors barricaded with bags of earth. Behind these the Americans fought hand to hand with despairing valor. Ramires, Siesma and Batres led the columns, and Santa Anna gave the signal of battle from a battery near the bridge. When the second charge was driven back, he became furious. He put himself in front of the men, and with shouts and oaths led them to the third charge. Xavier said that he inspired them with his own frenzy. They reached the foot of the wall, and the ladders were placed in position. The officers fell to the rear and forced the men to ascend them. As they reached the top they were stabbed, and the ladders overturned. Over and over, and over

again these attempts were made, until the garrison in the Alamo were exhausted with the struggle."

Navarro paused a few minutes, overpowered by his emotions. No one spoke. He could see Antonia's face, white as a spirit's, in the dim light, and he knew that Isabel was weeping and that the Señora had taken his hand.

"At last, at the hour of ten, the outer wall was gained. Then, room by room was taken with slaughter incredible. There were fourteen Americans in the hospital. They fired their rifles and pistols from their pallets with such deadly aim that Milagros turned a cannon shotted with grape and canister upon them. They were blown to pieces, but at the entrance of the door they left forty dead Mexicans."

"Ah Señor, Señor! tell me no more. My heart can not endure it."

"Mi madre," answered Isabel, "we must hear it all. Without it, one cannot learn to hate Santa Anna sufficiently"; and her small, white teeth snapped savagely, as she touched the hand of Lopez with an imperative "Proceed."

"Colonel Bowie was helpless in bed. Two

Mexican officers fired at him, and one ran forward to stab him ere he died. The dying man caught his murderer by the hair of his head, and plunged his knife into his heart. They went to judgment at the same moment."

"I am glad of it! Glad of it! The American would say to the Almighty: 'Thou gavest me life, and thou gavest me freedom; freedom, that is the nobler gift of the two. This man robbed me of both.' And God is just. The Judge of the whole earth will do right."

"At noon, only six of the one hundred and eighty-three were left alive. They were surrounded by Castrillon and his soldiers. Xavier says his general was penetrated with admiration for these heroes. He spoke sympathizingly to Crockett, who stood in an angle of the fort, with his shattered rifle in his right hand, and his massive knife, dripping with blood, in his left. His face was gashed, his white hair crimson with blood; but a score of Mexicans, dead and dying, were around him. At his side was Travis, but so exhausted that he was scarcely alive.

"Castrillon could not kill these heroes. He asked their lives of Santa Anna, who stood

with a scowling, savage face in this last citadel of his foes. For answer, he turned to the men around him, and said, with a malignant emphasis: '*Fire!*' It was the last volley. Of the defenders of the Alamo, not one is left."

A solemn silence followed. For a few minutes it was painful in its intensity. Isabel broke it. She spoke in a whisper, but her voice was full of intense feeling. "I wish indeed the whole city had been burnt up. There was a fire this afternoon; I would be glad if it were burning yet."

"May God pardon us all, Señorita! That was a fire which does not go out. It will burn for ages. I will explain myself. Santa Anna had the dead Americans put into ox-wagons, and carried to an open field outside the city. There they were burnt to ashes. The glorious pile was still casting lurid flashes and shadows as I passed it."

"I will hear no more! I will hear no more!" cried the Señora. "And I will go away from here. Ah, Señor, why do you not make haste? In a few hours we shall have daylight again. I am in a terror. Where is Ortiz?"

"The horses are not caught in a five minutes,

Señora. But listen, there is the roll of the wagon on the flagged court. All, then, is ready. Señora, show now that you are of a noble house, and in this hour of adversity be brave, as the Flores have always been."

She was pleased by the entreaty, and took his arm with a composure which, though assumed, was a sort of strength. She entered the wagon with her daughters, and uttered no word of complaint. Then Navarro locked the gate, and took his seat beside Ortiz. The prairie turf deadened the beat of their horses' hoofs; they went at a flying pace, and when the first pallid light of morning touched the east, they had left San Antonio far behind and were nearing the beautiful banks of the Cibolo.

## CHAPTER XV.

### GOLIAD.

"How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes bless'd?
* * * * *
By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung.
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there."

"How shall we rank thee upon glory's page?
Thou more than soldier, and just less than sage."

"Grief fills the room up of my absent child;
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me;
Remembers me of all his gracious parts."

NEAR midnight, on March the ninth, the weary fugitives arrived at Gonzales. They had been detained by the deep mud in the bottom lands, and by the extreme exhaustion of the ladies, demanding some hours' rest each day. The village was dark and quiet. Here and there the glimmer of a

candle, now and then the call of a sentry, or the wail of a child, broke the mysterious silence.

Ortiz appeared to know the ground perfectly. He drove without hesitation to a log house in which a faint thread of light was observable, and as he approached it he gave a long, peculiar whistle. The door was instantly thrown open, and, as the wagon stopped, two men stepped eagerly to it. In another instant the Señora was weeping in her husband's arms, and Isabel laughing and crying and murmuring her sweet surprises into the ear of the delighted Luis. When their wraps had been removed from the wagon, Ortiz drove away, leaving Navarro and Antonia standing by the little pile of ladies' luggage.

"I will take charge of all, Señorita. Alas! How weary you are!"

"It is nothing, Señor. Let me thank you for your great kindness."

"Señorita, to be of service to you is my good fortune. If it were necessary, my life for your life, and I would die happy."

She had given him her hand with her little speech of thanks, and he raised it to his lips.

It was an act of homage that he might have offered to a saint, but in it Lopez unconsciously revealed to Antonia the secret love in his heart. For he stood in the glow of light from the open door, and his handsome face showed, as in a glass darkly, the tenderness and hopelessness of his great affection. She was touched by the discovery, and though she had a nature faithful as sunrising she could not help a feeling of kindly interest in a lover so reticent, so watchful, so forgetful of himself.

The log cabin in which they found shelter was at least a resting-place. A fire of cedar logs burned upon the hearth, and there was a bed in the room, and a few rude chairs covered with raw hide. But the Señora had a happy smile on her weary face. She ignored the poverty of her surroundings. She had her Roberto, and, for this hour at least, had forgiven fate.

Presently the coffee-pot was boiling, and Doctor Worth and Luis brought out their small store of corn-bread and their tin camp-cups, and the weary women ate and drank, and comforted themselves in the love and protection

at their side. Doctor Worth sat by his wife, and gave Antonia his hand. Isabel leaned her pretty head against Luis, and listened with happy smiles to his low words:

"Charming little one, your lips are two crimson curtains. Between curtain and curtain my kiss is waiting. Give it to me."

"Eyes of my soul, to-night the world begins again for me."

"At this blessed hour of God, I am the happiest man he has made."

"As for me, here in this dear, white hand I put my heart."

Is there any woman who cannot imagine Isabel's shy glances, and the low, sweet words in which she answered such delightful protestations? And soon, to add a keener zest to his happiness, Luis began to be a little jealous.

"With us is Dias de Bonilla. Do you remember, my beloved one, that you danced with him once?"

"How can you say a thing so offensive?"

"Yes, dear, at the Señora Valdez's."

"It may be. I have forgotten."

"Too well he remembers. He has dared to

sing a serenade to your memory—well, truly, he did not finish it, and but for the Señor Doctor, I should have taught him that Isabel is not a name for his lips to utter. Here, he may presume to come into your presence. Will you receive him with extreme haughtiness? It would be a great satisfaction to me."

"The poor fellow! Why should I make him miserable? You should not be jealous, Luis."

"If you smile on him—the least little smile—he will think you are in love with him. He is such a fool, I assure you. I am very distressed about this matter, my angel."

"I will tell you Luis—when the myrtle-tree grows figs, and the fig-tree is pink with myrtle flowers, then I may fall in love with Dias de Bonilla—if I can take the trouble."

No one heeded this pretty, extravagant talk. It was a thing apart from the more serious interests discussed by Doctor Worth and his wife and eldest daughter. And when Ortiz and Navarro joined the circle, the story of the fall of the Alamo was told again, and Luis forgot his own happiness, and wept tears of anger and pity for the dead heroes.

"This brutal massacre was on the morning of the sixth, you say, Navarro?"

"Last Sabbath morning, Señor. Mass was being offered in the churches, and Te Deums sung while it went on."

"A mass to the devil it was," said Ortiz.

"Now, I will tell you something. On the morning of the second, Thomas was in Washington. A convention sitting there declared, on that day, the independence of Texas, and fifty-five out of fifty-six votes elected General Houston Commander-in-Chief."

"Houston! That is the name of victory! Graciás á Dios!" cried Navarro.

"It is probable that the news of this movement influenced Santa Anna to such barbarity."

"It is his nature to be brutal."

"True, Ortiz; yet I can imagine how this proclamation would incense him. On the morning of the sixth, the convention received the last express sent by poor Travis from the Alamo. It was of the most thrilling character, breathing the very spirit of patriotism and courage—and despair. In less than an hour, Houston, with a few companions, was on his

way to the Alamo. At the same time he sent an express to Fannin, urging him to meet him on the Cibolo. Houston will be here to-morrow."

"Then he will learn that all help is too late."

But Houston had learned it in his own way before he reached Gonzales; for Travis had stated that as long as the Alamo could be held, signal guns would be fired at sunrising; and it is a well-authenticated fact that these guns were heard by trained ears for more than one hundred miles across the prairie. Houston, whose senses were keen as the Indians with whom he had long lived knew when he was within reach of the sound; and he rose very early, and with his ear close to the ground waited in intense anxiety for the dull, rumbling murmur which would tell him the Alamo still held out. His companions stood at some distance, still as statues, intently watching him. The sun rose. He had listened in vain; not the faintest sound did his ear detect.

"The Alamo has fired its last gun," he said, on rejoining his companions.

"And the men, General?"

"They have died like men. You may be sure of that."

At Gonzales he heard the particulars. And he saw that the news had exerted a depressing influence upon the troops there. He called them together. He spoke to them of the brutal tragedy, and he invested its horrors with the grandeur of eternal purpose and the glory of heroic sacrifice.

"They were soldiers," he cried; "and they died like soldiers. Their names will be the morning stars of American history. They will live for ever in the red monument of the Alamo." He looked like a lion, with a gloomy stare; his port was fierce, and his eyes commanded all he viewed. "Vengeance remains to us! We have declared our independence, and it must be maintained."

He immediately sent off another express to Fannin; apprised him of the fall of the Alamo; ordered him to blow up Goliad and fall back upon Gonzales. Then he sent wagons into the surrounding country, to transport the women and children to the eastern settlements; for he knew well what atrocities would mark every mile of Santa Anna's progress through the country.

These wagons, with their helpless loads, were

to rendezvous at Peach Creek, ten miles from Gonzales ; where also he expected Fannin and his eight hundred and sixty men to join him. This addition would make the American force nearly twelve hundred strong. Besides which, Fannin's little army was of the finest material, being composed mostly of enthusiastic volunteers from Georgia and Alabama; young men, who, like Dare Grant and John Worth, were inspired with the idea of freedom, or the spread of Americanism, or the fanaticism of religious liberty of conscience—perhaps, even, with hatred of priestly domination. Houston felt that he would be sufficient for Santa Anna when the spirit of this company was added to the moral force of men driven from their homes and families to fight for the lands they had bought and the rights which had been guaranteed them.

So he watched the horizon anxiously for Fannin's approach, often laying his ear to the ground to listen for what he could not see. And, impatient as he was for their arrival, the Señora was more so. She declared that her sufferings would be unendurable but for this hope. The one question on her lips, the one

question in her eyes, was, "Are they coming?' And Antonia, though she did not speak of her private hopes, was equally anxious. Brother and lover were both very dear to her. And to have the whole family together would be in itself a great help. Whatever their deprivations and fatigues, they could comfort each other with their affection.

Every day wagon-loads of women and children joined the camp, and the march eastward was very slow. But no circumstance extols more loudly the bravery and tenderness of these American soldiers than the patience with which this encumbrance was endured. Men worn out with watching and foraging were never too weary to help some mother still more weary, or to carry some little child whose swollen feet would no longer aid it.

One night they rested at a little place on the Colorado. In one room of a deserted cabin Houston sat with Major Hockly, dictating to him a military dispatch. They had no candles, and Houston was feeding the fire with oak splinters, to furnish light enough for their necessity. In the other room, the Worth family were gathered. Antonia, in preparing

for their journey, had wisely laid a small mattress and a couple of pillows in the wagon; and upon this mattress the Señora and Isabel were resting. Doctor Worth and Thomas sat by the fire talking of Fannin's delay; and Antonia was making some corn-meal cakes for their supper.

When the Señora's portion was given to her she put it aside, and lifted her eyes to Antonia's face. They asked the question forever in her heart, "Is Jack coming?" and Antonia pitifully shook her head.

Then the poor woman seemed to have reached the last pitch of endurance. "Let me die!" she cried. "I can bear life no longer." To Mary and the saints she appealed with a passionate grief that was distressing to witness. All the efforts of her husband and her children failed to sooth her; and, as often happens in a complication of troubles, she seized upon the most trifling as the text of her complaint.

"I cannot eat corn bread; I have always detested it. I am hungry. I am perishing for my chocolate. And I have no clothing. I am ashamed of myself. I thank the saints I have

no looking-glass. Oh, Roberto! Roberto! What have you done to your Maria?"

"My dear wife! My dear, dear wife! Be patient a little longer. Think, love, you are not alone. There are women here far more weary, far more hungry; several who, in the confusion, have lost their little children; others who are holding dying babes in their arms."

"Giver of all good! give me patience. I have to say to you that other women's sorrows do not make me grateful for my own. And Santa Maria has been cruel to me. Another more cruel, who can find? I have confessed to her my heartache about Juan; entreated her to bring my boy to me. Has she done it?"

"My darling Maria."

"Grace of God, Roberto! It is now the twenty-third of March; I have been seventeen days wandering with my daughters like very beggars. If only I had had the discretion to remain in my own house!"

"Maria, Lopez will tell you that Fray Ignatius and the brothers are in possession of it. He saw them walking about the garden reading their breviaries."

At this moment General Houston, in the op-

posite room was dictating: "Before God, I have found the darkest hours of my life. For forty-eight hours I have neither eaten an ounce of anything, nor have I slept." The Señora's sobbing troubled him. He rose to close the door, and saw two men entering. One leaned upon the other, and appeared to be at the point of death.

"Where is there a doctor, General?

"In that room, sir. Have you brought news of Fannin?"

"I have."

"Leave your comrade with the doctor, and report."

The entrance of the wounded man silenced the Señora. She turned her face to the wall and refused to eat. Isabel sat by her side and held her hand. The doctor glanced at it as he turned away. It had been so plump and dimpled and white. It was now very thin and white with exposure. It told him far better than complaining, how much the poor woman had suffered. He went with a sigh to his patient.

"Stabbed with a bayonet through the shoulder—hard riding from Goliad—no food—no rest—that tells the whole story, doctor."

It was all he could say. A fainting fit followed. Antonia procured some stimulant, and when consciousness returned, assisted her father to dress the wound. Their own coffee was gone, but she begged a cup from some one more fortunate; and after the young man had drunk it, and had eaten a little bread, he was inclined to make light of his wound and his sufferings.

"Glad to be here at all," he said. "I think I am the only one out of five hundred."

"You cannot mean that you are of Fannin's command?"

"I *was* of Fannin's command. Every man in it has been shot. I escaped by a kind of miracle."

The doctor looked at the Señora. She seemed to be asleep. "Speak low," he said, "but tell me all."

The man sat upon the floor with his back against the wall. The doctor stooped over him. Antonia and Isabel stood beside their father.

"We heard of Urrea's approach at San Patricio. The Irish people of that settlement welcomed Urrea with great rejoicing. He was

a Catholic—a defender of the faith. But the American settlers in the surrounding country fled, and Fannin heard that five hundred women and children, followed by the enemy, were trying to reach the fortress of Goliad. He ordered Major Ward, with the Georgia battalions, to go and meet the fugitives. Many of the officers entreated him not to divide his men for a report which had come by way of the faithless colony of San Patricio.

"But Fannin thought the risk ought to be taken. He took it, and the five hundred women and children proved to be a regiment of Mexican dragoons. They surrounded our infantry on every side, and after two days' desperate fighting, the Georgia battalions were no more. In the meantime, Fannin got the express telling him of the fall of the Alamo, and ordering him to unite with General Houston. That might have been a possible thing with eight hundred and sixty men, but it was not possible with three hundred and sixty. However, we made the effort, and on the great prairie were attacked by the enemy lying in ambush there. Entirely encircled by them, yet still fighting and pressing onward, we defended ourselves

until our ammunition gave out. Then we accepted the terms of capitulation offered by Urrea, and were marched back to Goliad as prisoners of war. Santa Anna ordered us all to be shot."

"But you were prisoners of war?"

"Urrea laughed at the articles, and said his only intention in them was to prevent the loss of Mexican blood. Most of his officers remonstrated with with him, but he flew into a passion at Miralejes. 'The Señor Presidente's orders are not to be trifled with. By the Virgin of Guadelupe!' he cried, 'it would be as much as my own life was worth to disobey them.'

"It gave the Mexican soldiers pleasure to tell us these things, and though we scarcely believed such treachery possible, we were very uneasy. On the eighth day after the surrender, a lovely Sunday morning, we were marched out of the fort on pretence of sending us to Louisiana, according to the articles of surrender, and we were in high spirits at the prospect.

"But I noticed that we were surrounded by a double row of soldiers, and that made me suspicious. In a few moments, Fannin was marched into the centre, and told to sit down

on a low stool. He felt that his hour had come. He took his watch and his purse, and gave them to some poor woman who stood outside lamenting and praying for the poor Americans. I shall never forget the calmness and brightness of his face. The Mexican colonel raised his sword, the drums beat, and the slaughter began. Fifty men at a time were shot; and those whom the guns missed or crippled, were dispatched with the bayonet or lance."

"You escaped. How?"

"When the lips of the officer moved to give the order: Fire! I fell upon my face as if dead. As I lay, I was pierced by a bayonet through the shoulder, but I made no sign of life. After the execution, the camp followers came to rob the dead. A kind-hearted Mexican woman helped me to reach the river. I found a horse tied there, and I took it. I have been on the point of giving up life several times, but I met a man coming here with the news to Houston, and he helped me to hold out."

The doctor was trembling with grief and anger, and he felt Antonia's hand on his shoulder.

"My friend," he whispered, "did you know *John Worth?*"

"Who did not know him in Fannin's camp? Any of us would have been glad to save poor Jack; and he had a friend who refused to live without him."

"Dare Grant?"

"That was the man, young lady. Grant was a doctor, and the Mexicans wanted doctors. They offered him his life for his services, but he would not have it unless his friend's life also was spared. They were shot holding each other's hands, and fell together. I was watching their faces at the moment. There wasn't a bit of fear in them."

The Señora rose, and came as swiftly as a spirit to them. She looked like a woman walking in her sleep. She touched the stranger. "I heard you. You saw Dare Grant die. But my boy! My boy! Where is my Juan?"

"Maria, darling."

"Don't speak, Roberto. Where is my Juan? Juan Worth?"

"Madam. I am sorry enough, God knows, Juan Worth—was shot."

Then the wretched mother threw up her

hands, and with an awful cry fell to the ground. It was hours ere she recovered consciousness, and consciousness only restored her to misery.

The distress of the father, the brother and sisters of the dead youth was submerged in the speechless despair of the mother. She could not swallow food; she turned away from the the sympathy of all who loved her. Even Isabel's caresses were received with an apathy which was terrifying. With the severed curl of her boy's hair in her fingers, she sat in tearless, voiceless anguish.

Poor Antonia, weighed down with the double loss that had come to her, felt, for the first time, as if their condition was utterly hopeless. The mental picture of her brother and her lover meeting their tragic death hand in hand, their youth and beauty, their courage and fidelity, was constantly before her. With all the purity and strength of her true heart, she loved Dare; but she did not for a moment wish that he had taken a different course. "It is just what I should have expected from him," she said to Isabel. "If he had let poor Jack die alone, I could never have loved him

in the same way again. But oh, Isabel, how miserable I am?"

"Sweet Antonia, I can only weep with you. Think of this; it was on last Sunday morning. Do you remember how sad you were?"

"I was in what seemed to be an unreasonable distress. I went away to weep. My very thoughts were tired with their sorrowful journeys up and down my mind, trying to find out hope and only meeting despair. Oh, my brave Jack! Oh, my dear Dare, what a cruel fate was your's!"

"And mi madre, Antonia? I fear, indeed, that she will lose her senses. She will not speak to Thomas, nor even to me. She has not said a prayer since Jack's death. She cannot sleep. I am afraid of her, Antonia."

"To-night we are to move further east; perhaps the journey may waken her out of this trance of grief. I can see that our father is wretched about her; and Thomas wanders in and out of the room as if his heart was broken."

"Thomas loved Jack. Luis told me that he sat with him and Lopez, and that he sobbed like a woman. But, also, he means a great

revenge. None of the men slept last night. They stood by the camp-fires talking. Sometimes I went to the door and looked out. How awful they were in the blaze and darkness! I think, indeed, they could have conquered Santa Anna very easily."

Isabel had not misjudged the spirit of the camp. The news of the massacre at Goliad was answered by a call for vengeance that nothing but vengeance could satisfy. On the following day Houston addressed his little army. He reminded them that they were the children of the heroes who fought for liberty at Yorktown, and Saratoga, and Bunker Hill. He made a soul-stirring review of the events that had passed; he explained to them their situation, and the designs of the enemy, and how he proposed to meet them.

His voice, loud as a trumpet with a silver sound, inspired all who heard it with courage. His large, bright visage, serious but hopeful, seemed to sun the camp. "They live too long," he cried, "who outlive freedom. And I promise you that you shall have a full cup of vengeance. For every man that fell fighting at the Alamo, for every one treacherously

slaughtered at Goliad, you shall be satisfied. If I seem to be flying before the enemy now, it is for his destruction. Three Mexican armies united, we cannot fight. We can fight them singly. And every mile we make them follow us weakens them, separates them, confuses them. The low lands of the Brazos, the unfordable streams, the morasses, the pathless woods, are in league with us. And we must place our women and children in safety. Even if we have to carry them to General Gaines and the United States troops, we must protect them, first of all. I believe that we shall win our freedom with our own hands; but if the worst come, and we have to fall back to the Sabine, we shall find friends and backers there. I know President Jackson, my old general, the unconquered Christian Mars! Do you think he will desert his countrymen? Never! If we should need help, he has provided it. And the freedom of Texas is sure and certain. It is at hand. Prepare to achieve it. We shall take up our march eastward in three hours."

Ringing shouts answered the summons. The camp was in a tumult of preparation immediately; Houston was lending his great phys-

ical strength to the mechanical difficulties to be encountered. A crowd of men was around. Suddenly a woman touched him on the arm, and he straightened himself and looked at her.

"You will kill Santa Anna, General? You will kill this fiend who has escaped from hell! By the mother of Christ, I ask it."

"My dear madam!"

He was so moved with pity that he could not for a moment or two give her any stronger assurance. For this suppliant, pallid and frenzied with sorrow, was the once beautiful Señora Worth. He looked at her hollow eyes, and shrunk form, and worn clothing, and remembered with a pang, the lovely, gracious lady clad in satin and lace, with a jewelled comb in her fine hair and a jewelled fan in her beautiful hands, and a wave of pity and anger passed like a flame over his face.

"By the memory of my own dear mother, Señora, I will make Santa Anna pay the full price of his cruelties."

"Thank you, Señor"; and she glided away with her tearless eyes fixed upon the curl of black hair in her open palm.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE LOADSTONE IN THE BREAST.

"But to the hero, when his sword
Has won the battle for the free,
Thy voice sounds like a prophet's word,
And in its hollow tones are heard.
The thanks of millions yet to be,"

"Who battled for the true and just,

"And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance.

"And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees."

THE memorial of wrongs, which resulted in the Declaration of Texan Independence, was drawn up with statesmanlike ability by David G. Burnett, a native of New Jersey, a man of great learning, dignity, and experience; who, as early as 1806, sailed from New York to join Miranda in his effort to give Spanish America liberty. The paper need not be quoted here. It gave the greatest prominence

to the refusal of trial by jury, the failure to establish a system of public education, the tyranny of military law, the demand that the colonists should give up arms necessary for their protection or their sustenance, the inciting of the Indians to massacre the American settlers, and the refusal of the right to worship the Almighty according to the dictates of their own consciences. Burnett was elected Governor, and Houston felt that he could now give his whole attention to military affairs.

The seat of Government was removed to Harrisburg, a small place on the Buffalo Bayou; and Houston was sure that this change would cause Santa Anna to diverge from his route to Nacogdoches. He dispatched orders to the men scattered up and down the Brazos from Washington to Fort Bend—a distance of eighty miles—to join him on the march to Harrisburg, and he struck his own camp at the time he had specified.

In less than twenty-four hours they reached San Felipe, a distance of twenty-eight miles. The suffering of the women and children on that march can never be told. Acts of heroism on the part of the men and of fortitude

on the part of the women that are almost incredible, marked every step of the way. The Señora sat in her wagon, speechless, and lost in a maze of melancholy anguish. She did not seem to heed want, or cold, or wet, or the utter misery of her surroundings. Her soul had concentrated all its consciousness upon the strand of hair she continually smoothed through her fingers. Dr. Worth, in his capacity of physician, accompanied the flying families, and he was thus able to pay some attention to his distraught wife; but she answered nothing he said to her. If she looked at him, her eyes either flamed with anger, or expressed something of the terror to be seen in the eyes of a hunted animal. It was evident that her childish intelligence had seized upon him as the most obvious cause of all her loss and misery.

The condition of a wife so beloved almost broke his heart. The tragic death of his dear son was not so hard to endure as this living woe at his side. And when they reached San Felipe and found it in ashes, a bitter cry of hopeless suffering came from every woman's lips. They had thought to find there a lit-

tle food, and a day's sheltered resting-place. Even Antonia's brave soul fainted at the want and suffering around her. She had gold, but it could not buy bread for the little ones, weeping with hunger and terrified by the fretfulness of mothers suffering the pangs of want and in the last stage of human weariness.

It was on this night Houston wrote: "I will do the best I can; but be assured the fame of Jackson could never compensate me for my anxiety and mental pain." And yet, when he was told that a blind woman and her seven children had been passed by, and did not know the enemy were approaching, he delayed the march until men had been sent back to bring them into safety.

During these days of grief and privation Isabel's nature grew to its finest proportions. Her patient efforts to arouse her mother, and her cheerfulness under the loss of all comforts, were delightful. Besides which, she had an inexhaustible fund of sympathy for the babies. She was never without one in her arms. Three mothers, who had died on the road, left their children to her care. And it was wonderful and pitiful to see the delicately nurtured girl,

making all kinds of efforts to secure little necessaries for the children she had elected to care for.

"The Holy Mother helps me," she said to Antonia. "She makes the poor little ones good, and I am not very tired."

At San Felipe they were joined by nearly one hundred men, who also brought word that a fine company were advancing to their aid from Mississippi, under General Quitman; and that two large cannon, sent by the people of Cincinnati, were within a few miles. And thus hoping and fearing, hungry and weary to the death, they reached, on the 16th of April, after a march of eighteen miles, a place called McArley's. They had come over a boggy prairie under a cold rain, and were depressed beyond expression. But there was a little shelter here for the women and children to sleep under. The men camped in the open. They had not a tent in their possession.

About ten o'clock that night, Doctor Worth was sitting with his wife and children and Antonia in one corner of a room in a deserted cabin. He had the Señora's wasted hand in his own, and was talking to her. She sat in

apathetic silence. It was impossible to tell whether she heard or understood him.

"I wonder where Isabel is," said Antonia; and with the words the girl entered the room. She had in her arms a little lad of four years old, suffering the tortures of croup.

"Mi madre," she cried, "you know how to save him! He is dying! Save him! Listen to me! The Holy Mother says so"; and she laid the child on her knee.

A change like a flash of light passed over the Señora's face. "The poor little one!" Her motherly instincts crushed down everything else. In the child's agony she forgot her own grief. With glad hearts the doctor and Antonia encouraged her in her good work, and when at length the sufferer had been relieved and was sleeping against her breast, the Señora had wept. The stone from her heart had been rolled away by a little child. Her own selfish sorrow had been buried in a wave of holy, unselfish maternal affection. The key to her nature had been found, and henceforward Isabel brought to her every suffering baby.

On the next day they marched ten miles through a heavy rain, and arrived at Burnett's

settlement. The women had shelter, the men slept on the wet ground—took the prairie without cover—with their arms in their hands. They knew they were in the vicinity of Santa Anna, and all were ready to answer in an instant the three taps of the drum, which was the only instrument of martial music in the camp, and which was never touched but by Houston.

Another day of eighteen miles brought them to within a short distance of Harrisburg. Santa Anna had just been there, and the place was in ashes. It was evident to all, now, that the day and the hour was at hand. Houston first thought of the two hundred families he had in charge, and they were quickly taken over the bayou. When he had seen the last one in this comparative safety, he uttered so fervent a "Thank God!" that the men around unconsciously repeated it. The bayou though narrow was twenty feet deep, and the very home of alligators. There was only one small bridge in the vicinity. He intended its destruction, and thus to make his little band and the deep, dangerous stream a double barrier between the Mexicans and the women and

children beyond them. It was after this duty he wrote:

"This morning we are in preparation to meet Santa Anna. We will only be about seven hundred to march, besides the camp guard. But we go to conquest. The troops are in fine spirits, and now is the time for action. I leave the result in the hands of an all-wise God, and I rely confidently in his Providence.

"SAM HOUSTON."*

The women and children, under a competent guide, continued their march eastward. But they were worn out. Many were unable to put their feet to the ground. The wagons were crowded with these helpless ones. The Señora had so far recovered as to understand that within a few hours Santa Anna and the Americans must meet. And, mentally led by Isabel's passionate hatred, she now showed a vindictiveness beyond that of any other woman.

She spent hours upon her knees, imploring the saints, and the stars, and the angel Michael,

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* Copy from Department of War of the Republic of Texas.

to fight against Santa Anna. To Isabel she whispered, "I have even informed the evil one where he may be found. The wretch who ordered such infamies! He poisons the air of the whole world as he goes through it. I shall never be happy till I know that he is in purgatory. He will be hated even there—and in a worse place, too. Yes, it is pleasant to think of that! There will be many accusers of him there. I shall comfort myself with imagining his punishment. Isabel, do you believe with your heart that Señor Houston and the Americans will be strong enough to kill him?"

"Mi madre, I know it."

"Then do be a little delighted. How can you bear things with such a provoking indifference? But as Luis is safe—"

"Chito! Chito! Do not be cruel, mi madre. I would stab Santa Anna with my own hands —very slowly, I would stab him. It would be so sweet. The Sisters told me of a woman in the Holy Book, who smiled upon the one she hated, and gave him milk and butter, and when he slept, drove a great nail through his temples. I know how she felt. What a feast it would be, to strike, and strike, and strike! I

could drive ten, twenty, fifty nails, into Santa Anna, when I think of Juan."

No one had before dared to breathe her boy's name in her hearing. She herself had never spoken it. It fell upon the ears of both women like a strain of forgotten music. They looked at each other with eyes that stirred memory and love to their sweetest depths. Almost in whispers they began to talk of the dead boy, to recall how lovable, how charming, how affectionate, how obedient he had been. Then the Señora broke open the seals of her sorrow, and, with bitter reproaches on herself, confessed that the kiss she had denied her Juan was a load of anguish upon her heart that she could not bear.

"If I had only blessed him," she moaned; "I had saved him from his misfortune. A mother's blessing is such a holy thing! And he knelt at my knees, and begged it. I can see his eyes in the darkness, when my eyes are shut. I can hear his voice when I am asleep. Isabel, I shall never be happy till I see Juan again, and say to him, 'Forgive me, dear one, forgive me, for I have suffered.'"

Both were weeping, but Isabel said, bravely:

"I am sure that Juan does not blame you now, mi madre. In the other world one understands better. And remember, also, the letter which he wrote you. His last thought was yours. He fell with your name on his lips. These things are certain. And was it not good of Dare to die with him? A friend like that! Out of the tale-books who ever hears of such a thing? Antonia has wept much. In the nights, when she thinks I am asleep, I hear her. Have you seen that she has grown white and thin? I think that my father is very unhappy about her."

"In an hour of mercy may the merciful One remember Dare Grant! I will pray for his peace as long as I live. If he had left Juan—if he had come back alone—I think indeed I should have hated him."

"That was also the opinion of Antonia—she would never have loved him the same. I am sure she would not have married him."

"My good Antonia! Go bring her to me, Isabel. I want to comfort her. She has been so patient with me. I have felt it—felt it every minute; and I have been stupid and selfish, and have forgotten that she too was suffering."

The next day it was found impossible to move. The majority of the women had husbands with the army. They had left their wives, to secure everlasting freedom for their children; but, even if Houston was victorious, they might be wounded and need their help. To be near them in any case was the one thing about which they were positive.

"We will not move another inch," said a brave little Massachusetts woman, who had been the natural leader of this domestic Exodus; "we will rest ourselves a little here, and if the Mexicans want some extraordinary fighting they can have it; especially, if they come meddling with us or our children. My husband told me just to get out of reach of shot and shell and wait there till we heard of the victory, and I am for doing *that*, and no other thing."

Nearly two hundred women, bent upon their own way, are not to be taken any other way; and the few old men who had been sent to guide the party, and shoot what game was necessary for their support, surrendered at once to this feminine mutiny. Besides, the condition of the boys and girls between seven and fourteen

was really a deplorable one. They were too old to be cared for as infants, and they had been obliged, with the strength of children, to accomplish the labor of men and women. Many were crippled in their feet, others were continually on the point of swooning.

It was now the 20th of April. The Señora and her daughters had been six weeks with the American army, exposed to all the privations which such a life entailed. But the most obvious of these privations were, perhaps, those which were most easily borne. Women endure great calamities better than the little annoyances affecting those wants which are part and parcel of their sex or their caste. It was not the necessaries so much as the luxuries of life which the Señora missed—the changes of raiment—the privacy—the quiet—the regularity of events.

During the whole of the 20th, there was almost a Sabbath stillness. It was a warm, balmy day. The wearied children were under the wagons and under the trees, sleeping the dead sleep of extreme exhaustion. The mothers, wherever it was possible, slept also. The guides were a little

apart, listening and smoking. If they spoke, it was only in monosyllables. Rest was so much more needed than food that little or no attempt was made to cook until near sundown.

At dawn next morning—nay, a little before dawn—when all was chill, and gray, and misty, and there was not a sound but the wailing of a sick child, the Señora touched her daughters. Her voice was strange to them; her face solemnly happy.

"Antonio! Isabel! *I have seen Juan! I have seen Juan!* My eyes were shut, but I have seen him. He was a beautiful shadow, with a great, shadowy host around him. He bent on me such eyes! Holy Mother! their love was unfathomable, and I heard his voice. It was far off, yet near. 'Madre!' he said, '*To-morrow you shall hear from us.*' Now I am happy. There are words in my heart, but I cannot explain them to you. I know what they mean. I will weep no more. They put my Juan's body in the grave, but they have not buried *him.*"

All day she was silent and full of thought, but her face was smiling and hopeful, and she had the air of one waiting for some assured

happiness. About three o'clock in the afternoon she stood up quickly and cried, "Hark! the battle has begun!" Every one listened intently, and after a short pause the oldest of the guides nodded. "I'd give the rest of my life to be young again," he said, "just for three hours to be young, and behind Houston!"

"*To-morrow we shall hear.*"

The words fell from the Señora's lips with a singular significance. Her face and voice were the face and voice of some glad diviner, triumphantly carrying her own augury. Under a little grove of trees she walked until sunset, passing the beads of her rosary through her fingers, and mechanically whispering the prayers appointed. The act undoubtedly quieted her, but Antonia knew that she lay awake all night, praying for the living or the dead.

About ten o'clock of the morning of the 22d, a horseman was seen coming toward the camp at full speed. Women and children stood breathlessly waiting his approach. No one could speak. If a child moved, the movement was angrily reproved. The tension was too

great to admit of a touch through any sense. Some, unable to bear the extended strain, sank upon the ground and covered their faces with their hands. But the half-grown children, wan with privations and fever, ragged and barefoot, watched steadily the horse and its rider, their round, gleaming eyes full of wonder and fear.

"It is Thomas," said the Señora.

As he came near, and the beat of the horse's hoofs could be heard, a cry almost inarticulate, not to be described, shrill and agonizing in its intensity, broke simultaneously from the anxious women. It was one cry from many hearts, all at the last point of endurance. Thomas Worth understood it. He flung his hat up, and answered with a joyful "Hurrah!"

When he reached the camp, every face was wet with tears, and a crowd of faces was instantly round him. All the agonies of war were on them. He raised himself in his stirrups and shouted out:

"You may all go back to your homes! Santa Anna is completely overthrown! The Mexican army is destroyed! There will be no more fighting, no more fears. The indepen-

dence of Texas is won! No matter where you come from, *you are all Texans now!* Victory! Freedom! Peace! My dear friends, go back to your homes. Your husbands will join you at the San Jacinto."

Then he dismounted and sought his mother and sisters. With joyful amazement he recognized the change in the Señora. "You look like yourself, dear mother," he said. "Father sends you this kiss. He would have brought it, but there are a few wounded men to look after; and also I can ride quicker. Antonia, cheer up my dear!—and Isabel, little darling, you will not need to cry any more for your ribbons, and mantillas, and pretty dresses."

"Thomas! You have not much feeling, I think. What I want to know about, is Luis. You think of no one; and, as for my dresses, and mantillas, I dare say Fray Ignatius has sold, or burned them.'

"Queridita! Was I cruel? Luis is well. He has not a scratch. He was in the front of the battle, too."

"*That*, of course. Would you imagine that Luis would be at the rear? He is General

Houston's friend, and one lion knows another lion."

"Pretty one, do not be angry with me. I will tell you some good news. Luis is coming here, unless you go back at once with me."

"We will go back with you, Thomas. I am full of impatience. I remember my dear home. I will go to it, like a bird to its nest."

In half an hour they had turned the heads of their horses westward again. They went so rapidly, and were under so much excitement, that sustained conversation was impossible. And the Señora also fell into a sound sleep as soon as the first homeward steps had been taken. Whatever had been made known to her by Juan had received its fulfilment. She was assured and happy. She slept till they reached the victorious camp, and her husband awakened her with a kiss. She answered him with her old childish impulsiveness. And among the first words she said, were: "Roberto, my beloved, I have seen Juan."

He believed her. To his reverent soul there was nothing incredible in the statement. The tie between a mother and her child is not

broken by death. Was it unlikely, then, that Juan should have been conscious of, and touched by, the mental agony which his untimely death had caused a mother so beloved?

And oh! how different was the return to the ground west of the Buffalo Bayou. The very atmosphere was changed. A day or two of spring had brought out the flowers and unfolded every green thing. Doctor Worth took his family to a fine Mexican marquee, and among other comforts the Señora found there the chocolate she had so long craved, and some cigaritos of most delicate flavor.

In a short time a luxurious meal was prepared by Antonia, and just as they were sitting down to it, Luis and Lopez entered the tent together. Isabel had expected the visit and prepared for it as far as her limited wardrobe permitted. And her fine hair, and bright eyes, her perfect face and form, and the charming innocence of her manners, adorned her as the color and perfume of the rose make the beauty of the flower. She was so lovely that she could dare to banter Luis on the splendor of his attire.

"It is evident, mi madre, that Luis has

found at least the baggage of a major-general. Such velvet and silver embroidery! Such a silk sash! They are fit at the very least for a sultan of the Turks."

He came to her crowned with victory. Like a hero he came, and like a lover. They had a thousand pretty things to say to each other; and a thousand blissful plans in prospect. Life to them had never before been so well worth living.

Indeed, a wonderful exaltation possessed both Luis and Lopez. The sombre, handsome face of the latter was transfigured by it. He kissed the hand of the Señora, and then turned to Antonia. Her pallor and emaciation shocked him. He could only murmur, "Señorita!" But she saw the surprise, the sorrow, the sympathy, yes, the adoring love in his heart, and she was thankful to him for the reticence that relieved her from special attention.

Doctor Worth made room for Lopez beside him. Luis sat by Isabel, upon a pile of splendid military saddle-cloths. As she sipped her chocolate, he smoked his cigarito in a lazy fashion, and gave himself up with delight to

that foolishness of love-making which is often far wiser than the very words of wisdom.

As yet the ladies had not spoken of the battle. It was won. That great fact had been as much as they could bear at first. The Señora wanted to sleep. Isabel wanted to see Luis. Only Antonia was anxious for the details, and she had been busy in preparing the respectable meal which her mother had so long craved. The apparent indifference was natural enough. The assurance of good fortune is always sufficient for the first stage of reaction from anxiety. When the most urgent personal feelings have been satisfied, then comes the demand for detail and discussion. So now, as they sat together, the Señora said:

"No one has told me anything about the battle. Were you present, Roberto?"

"I had that great honor, Maria. Lopez and Luis were with the cavalry, and Ortiz also has had some satisfaction for all his wrongs."

"Very good! But I am impatient for the story; so is Antonia; and as for Isabel—bah! the little one is listening to another story. One must excuse her. We expected the battle on the twentieth, but no!

"The enemy were expecting it also, and were in high spirits and perfect preparation. Houston thought it prudent to dash their enthusiasm by uncertainty and waiting. But at dawn, on the twenty-first, we heard the three taps of the drum, and seven hundred soldiers sprang to their feet as one man. Houston had been watching all night. He spoke to us with a tongue of fire and then, while we cooked and ate our breakfast, he lay down and slept. The sun came up without a cloud, and shone brightly on his face. He sprang to his feet and said to Burleson, as he saluted him: 'The sun of Austerlitz has risen again.'

"Some one brought him a piece of corn-bread and broiled beef. He sat upon the grass and ate it—or rather upon the blue hyacinths that covered the grass; they are red now. For many weeks I had not seen his countenance so bright; all traces of trouble and anxiety were gone. He called Deaf Smith—the scout of scouts—and quickly ordered him to cut down the only bridge across the bayou.

"At nine o'clock, General Cos joined Santa Anna with five hundred and forty men, and for

a moment I thought we had made a mistake in not attacking the enemy before his reinforcements came up. But the knowledge that Cos was present, raised enthusiasm to the highest pitch. Our troops remembered his parole at the Alamo, and the shameful manner in which he had broken it; and there was not a man who did not long to kill him for it.

"About three o'clock in the afternoon, Houston ordered the attack. The seven hundred Americans were divided into three bodies. I saw Houston in the very centre of the line, and I have a confused memory of Milard and Lamar, Burleson and Sherman and Wharton, in front of their divisions."

"Were the Mexicans expecting the attack, father?"

"They were in perfect order, Antonia; and when Sherman shouted the battle-cry: '*Remember the Alamo! Goliad and the Alamo!*' it was taken up by the whole seven hundred, and such a shout of vengeance mortal ears never heard before. The air was full of it, and it appeared to be echoed and repeated by innumerable voices.

"With this shout on our lips, we advanced

to within sixty paces of the Mexican lines, and then a storm of bullets went flying over our heads. One ball, however, shattered Houston's ankle, and another struck his horse in the breast. But both man and horse were of the finest metal, and they pressed on regardless of their wounds. We did not answer the volley until we poured our lead into their very bosoms. No time for reloading then. We clubbed our rifles till they broke, flung them away and fired our pistols in the eyes of the enemy; then, nothing else remaining, took our bowie-knives from our belts and cut our way through the walls of living flesh."

Lopez rose at the words. It was impossible for him to express himself sufficiently in an attitude of repose. His eyes glowed like fire, his dark face was like a flame, he threw up his hands as he cried:

"Nothing comparable to that charge with knives was ever made on earth! If I had seen through the smoke and vapor the mighty shade of Bowie leading it, I should not have been surprised."

"Perhaps indeed, he did lead it," said the Señora, in a solemn voice. "I saw, yes, by

all the saints of God! I saw a great host with my Juan. They stretched out vast, shadowy arms—they made me *feel* what I can never tell. But I shall honor Señor Houston. I shall say to him some day, 'Señor, the unseen battalions — the mighty dead as well as the mighty living—won the battle.' Roberto, believe me, there are things women understand better than wise men."

A little awe, a solemn silence, answered the earnest woman. Luis and Isabel came close to her, and Isabel took her hand. Lopez resumed the conversation. "I know Colonel Bowie," he said. "In the last days at San Antonio I was often with him. Brave as a lion, true to his friends, relentless to his foes, was he. The knife he made was the expression of his character in steel. It is a knife of *extreme unction*—the oil and wafer are all that remains for the men who feels its edge. For my part, I honor the Señora's thought. It is a great satisfaction to me to hope that Bowie, and Crockett, and Travis, and Fannin, and all their company were present at San Jacinto. If the just God permitted it, 'twas a favor of supreme justice."

"But then you are not alone in the thought, Lopez. I heard General Sherman say, 'Poor Fannin! He has been blamed for not obeying Houston's orders. *I think he obeyed them to-day.*' At the moment I did not comprehend; but now it is plain to me. He thought Fannin had been present, and perhaps it was this belief made him so impetuous and invincible. He fought like a spirit; one forgot that he was flesh and blood."

"Sherman is of a grand stock," said the doctor; "descended from the wise Roger Sherman; bred in Massachusetts and trained in all the hardy virtues of her sons. It was from his lips the battle-cry of '*Remember the Alamo!*' sprang."

"But then, Roberto, nothing shall persuade me that my countrymen are cowards."

"On the contrary, Maria, they kept their ground with great courage. They were slain by hundreds just where they stood when the battle began. Twenty-six officers and nearly seven hundred men were left dead upon the field. But the flight was still more terrible. Into the bayou horses and men rolled down together. The deep black stream became red;

it was choked up with their dead bodies, while the mire and water of the morass was literally bridged with the smothered mules and horses and soldiers."

"The battle began at three o'clock; but we heard the firing only for a very short time," said Antonia.

"After we reached their breastworks it lasted just eighteen minutes. At four, the whole Mexican army was dead, or flying in every direction, and the pursuit and slaughter continued until twilight. Truly an unseen power made all our moves for us. It was a military miracle, for our loss was only eight killed and seventeen wounded."

"I am sorry Houston is among the wounded."

"His ankle-bone is shattered. He is suffering much. I was with him when he left the field and I was delighted with his patience and dignity. The men crowded around him. They seized his bridle; they clasped his hands. 'Have we done well to-day, General? Are you satisfied with us?' they cried.

"'You have covered yourselves with glory,' he answered. 'You have written a grand page

in American history this day, boys. For it was not for fame nor for empire you fought; but for your rights as freemen, for your homes and your faith.'

"The next moment he fell from his horse, and we laid him down at the foot of an oak tree. He had fainted from loss of blood and the agony of his wound, combined with the superhuman exertions and anxieties of the past week."

"But he is better now?"

"Yes; I dressed the wound as well as my appliances permitted; but he will not be able to use his foot for some time. No one slept that night. Weary as the men were, their excitement and happiness were too great for the bonds of sleep. In the morning the rich spoils of the enemy's camp were divided among them. Houston refused any part in them. 'My share of the honor is sufficient,' he said. Yet the spoils were very valuable ones to men who but a few hours before had nothing but the clothing they wore and the arms they carried. Among them were nearly one thousand stand of English muskets, three hundred valuable mules, one hundred fine horses, provisions,

clothing, tents, and at least twelve thousand dollars in silver."

"Were you on the field all the time, father?"

"I was near Houston from first to last. When he saw the battle was won, he did his best to prevent needless slaughter. But men on a battle-field like San Jacinto cannot be reasoned with; after a certain point, they could not even be commanded. The majority had some private revenge to satisfy after the public welfare had been served. We met one old man in a frenzy, covered with blood from his white beard to his boots, his arms bare to his shoulders, his knife dripping from haft to point."

"Houston looked at him, and said something about mercy and valor. 'General,' he said, 'they killed two of my boys at Goliad, and my brother at the Alamo. I'll not spare a Mexican while I've the strength to kill one. I'm on the scent for Santa Anna, and, by G—, if I find him, I will spare Texas and you any more trouble with the brute.'"

At this moment Thomas Worth entered the marquee, and, in an excited manner, said:

"Santa Anna is taken! Santa Anna is taken!"

"Taken!" cried the Señora in a passion. "Taken! Is it possible the wretch is yet in this world? I was assuring myself that he was in one not so comfortable. Why is he not killed? It is an inconceivable insult to humanity to let him live. Have you thought of your brother Juan? Give me the knife in your belt, Thomas, if you cannot use it."

"My dear mother—"

"Maria, my life! Thomas could not wisely kill so important a prisoner. Texas wants him to secure her peace and independence. The lives of all the Americans in Mexico may depend upon his. Mere personal vengeance on him would be too dear a satisfaction. On the battle-field he might have been lawfully slain—and he was well looked for; but now, No."

"Holy Mary! might have been slain! He ought to have been slain, a thousand times over."

"Luis, I wish that you had been a hero, and killed him. Then all our life long, if you had said, 'Isabel, I slew Santa Anna,' I should

have given you honor for it. I should be obedient to your wishes for that deed."

"But my charming one, I prefer to be obedient to your wish. Let us not think of the creature; he is but a dead dog."

The doctor turned to his son. "Thomas, tell us about the capture."

"I was riding with a young lieutenant, called Sylvester, from Cincinnati, and he saw a man hiding in the grass. He was in coarsest clothing, but Sylvester noticed under it linen of fine cambric. He said: 'You are an officer, I perceive, sir.' The man denied it, but when he could not escape, he asked to be taken to General Houston. Sylvester tied him to his bridle-rein, and we soon learned the truth; for as we passed the Mexican prisoners they lifted their hats and said, with a murmur of amazement, 'El Presidente!'

"The news spread like wildfire. As we took him through the camp he trembled at the looks and words that assailed him, and prayed us continually, 'for the love of God and the saints,' not to let him be slain. We took him to Houston in safety. Houston was resting on the ground, having had, as my father knows,

a night of great suffering. Santa Anna approached him, and, laying his hand on his heart, said: 'I am General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, President of the Mexican Republic, and I claim to be your prisoner of war.' Houston pointed to a seat, and then sent for Santa Anna's secretary, Almonte, who is also a prisoner, and who speaks English perfectly.

"When Almonte came, he embraced Santa Anna, and addressing Houston, said: 'General, you are born to a great destiny. You have conquered the Napoleon of the West. Generosity becomes the brave and the fortunate.'

"Houston answered, sternly: 'You should have remembered that sentiment at the Alamo and at Goliad.'

"Then the following conversation occurred. Santa Anna said:

"'The Alamo was taken by storm. The usages of war permitted the slaughter.'

"'We live in the nineteenth century, President. We profess to be Christians.'

"'I have to remind you, General Houston, of the storming of San Sebastian, Ciudad, Riego and Badajos, by the Duke of Wellington.'

"'That was in Spain. There may have been circumstances demanding such cruelty.'

"'Permit me also to bring to your intelligence the battles at Fort Meigs and at the river Raisin. American prisoners were there given by English officers to their Indian allies for torture and death. The English war cry at Sandusky was, "Give the d— Yankees no quarter."'

"'Sir, permit me to say, that you read history to a devilish purpose, if you read it to search after brutal precedents. At Goliad our men surrendered. They were promised safe-conduct out of Texas. The massacre at Goliad was a ferocious crime.'

"'It was precisely the same thing as the wholesale murder of Turkish prisoners at Jaffa by the great Napoleon. Also I had the positive orders of my government to slay all Americans found with arms.'

"'These men had given up their arms.'

"'All Americans—my government said so.'

"'Sir! *you* are the government of Mexico. You obeyed your own orders.'

"'You will at least allow that, in the eyes of recognized nations, your army was but a band

of desperadoes, without government, and fighting under no flag.'

"'Sir, you show a convenient ignorance. We have a government; and as soon as we can lay down our rifles, we shall probably be able to make a flag. I say to you, President Santa Anna, that the butchery at Goliad was without an excuse and without a parallel in civilized warfare. The men had capitulated to General Urrea.'

"'Urrea had no right to receive their capitulation.' Then his mild, handsome face became in a moment malicious and tigerish, and he said with a cruel emphasis: 'If I ever get Urrea into my hands, I will execute him! I perceive, however, that I have never understood the American character. For the few thousands in the country, I thought my army an overwhelming one. I underestimated their ability.'

"'I tell you, sir, an army of millions would be too small to enslave ten thousand free-born anglo-Americans. Liberty is our birthright. We have marched four days on an ear or two of dry corn, and then fought a battle after it'; and Houston drew from his pocket an ear, par-

tially consumed, which had been his ration. 'We have had no tents, no music, no uniforms, no flag, nothing to stimulate us but the determination to submit to no wrong, and to have every one of our rights.'

"Then he turned to Rusk and Sherman, and called a military counsel about the prisoner, who was placed in an adjoining tent under a sufficient guard. But the excitement is intense; and the wretch is suffering, undoubtedly, all the mortal terrors of being torn to pieces by an infuriated soldiery. Houston will have to speak to them. They will be influenced by no other man."

The discussion upon this event lasted until midnight. But the ladies retired to their own tent much earlier. They knelt together in grateful prayer, and then kissed each other upon their knees. It was so sweet to lie down once more in safety; to have the luxury of a tent, and a mattress, and pillow.

"Blessed be the hand of God! my children," said the Señora; "and may the angels give us in our dreams grateful thoughts."

And then, in the dark, Isabel nestled her head in her sister's breast, and whispered:

"Forgive me for being happy, sweet Antonia. Indeed, when I smiled on Luis, I was often thinking of you. In my joy and triumph and love, I do not forget that one great awful grave at Goliad. But a woman must hide so many things; do you comprehend me, Antonia?"

"Querdita," she whispered, "I comprehend all. God has done right. If His angel had said to me, 'One must be taken and the other left,' I should have prayed, 'Spare then my little sister all sorrow.' Good-night, my darling"; but as their lips met, Isabel felt upon her cheeks the bitter rain which is the price of accepted sacrifice; the rain, which afterwards makes the heart soft, and fresh, and responsive to all the airs of God.

At the same moment, the white curtains of the marquee, in which the doctor sat talking with his son and Luis and Lopez, were opened; and the face of Ortiz showed brown and glowing between them.

"Señors," he said, as he advanced to them, "I am satisfied. I have been appointed on the guard over Santa Anna. He has recognized me. He has to obey my orders. Will you think of that?" Then taking the doctor's

hand he raised it to his lips. "Señor, I owe this satisfaction to you. You have made me my triumph. How shall I repay you?"

"By being merciful in the day of your power, Ortiz."

"I assure you that I am not so presumptuous, Señor. Mercy is the right of the Divinity. It is beyond my capacity. Besides which, it is not likely the Divinity will trouble himself about Santa Anna. I have, therefore, to obey the orders of the great, the illustrious Houston; which are, to prevent his escape at all risks. May St. James give me the opportunity, Señors! In this happy hour, á Dios!"

Then Lopez bent forward, and with a smile touched the doctor's hand. "Will you now remember the words I said of Houston? Did I not tell you, that success was with him? that on his brow was the line of fortune? that he was the loadstone in the breast of freedom?"

## CHAPTER XVII.

### HOME AGAIN.

"Where'er we roam,
Our first, best country ever is at home."

"What constitutes a state?
Men who their duties know;
But know their rights, and knowing, dare maintain.

"And sovereign law, that states collected will
O'er thrones and globes elate,
Sits empress; crowning good, repressing ill.'

"This hand to tyrants ever sworn a foe,
For freedom only deals the deadly blow;
Then sheathes in calm repose the vengeful blade,
For gentle peace, in freedom's hallowed shade."

THE vicinity of a great battle-field is a dreadful place after the lapse of a day or two. The bayou and the morass had provided sepulture for hundreds of slain Mexicans, but hundreds still lay upon the open prairie. Over it, birds of prey hung in dark clouds, heavy-winged, sad, sombre, and silent. Nothing dis-

turbed them. They took no heed of the living. Armed with invincible talons and beaks tipped with iron, they carried on ceaselessly that automatic gluttony, which made them beneficent crucibles of living fire, for all which would otherwise have corrupted the higher life. And yet, though innocent as the elements, they were odious in the sight of all.

Before daylight in the morning the Señora and her daughters were ready to begin their homeward journey. The doctor could not accompany them, General Houston and the wounded Americans being dependent largely upon his care and skill. But Luis Alveda and Lopez Navarro received an unlimited furlough; and about a dozen Mexican prisoners of war belonging to San Antonio were released on Navarro's assurance, and permitted to travel with the party as camp servants. It was likely, also, that they would be joined by a great many of the families who had accompanied the great flight; for, on the preceding evening, Houston had addressed the army, and told the householders and farmers to go home and plant their corn.

Full of happiness, the ladies prepared for

their journey. A good army wagon, drawn by eight mules, and another wagon, containing two tents and everything necessary for a comfortable journey, was waiting for them. The doctor bid them good-by with smiles and cheerful promises. They were going home. The war was over. Independence was won. They had the hope of permanent peace. The weather also was as the weather may be among the fields of Eden. The heavens were cloudless, the air sweet and fresh, and the wild honeysuckles, with their spread hands full of scent, perfumed the prairies mile after mile. The mules went knee-deep through warm grasses; the grasses were like waving rainbows, with the myriads of brightly tinted flowers.

Even Lopez was radiantly happy. Most unusual smiles lighted up his handsome face, and he jingled the silver ornaments on his bridle pleasantly to his thoughts as he cantered sometimes a little in advance of the wagon, sometimes in the rear, occasionally by its side; then, bending forward to lift his hat to the ladies and inquire after their comfort.

Luis kept close to Isabel; and her lovely face and merry chatter beguiled him from all

other observations. A little before noon they halted in a beautiful wood; a tent was spread for the ladies, the animals were loosened from their harness, and a luxurious meal laid upon the grass. Then the siesta was taken, and at three o'clock travel was resumed until near sunset, when the camp was made for the night. The same order was followed every day, and the journey was in every sense an easy and delightful one. The rides, cheered by pleasant companionship, were not fatiguing; the impromptu meals were keenly relished. And there were many sweet opportunities for little strolls in the dim green woods, and for delightful conversations, as they sat under the stars, while the camp-fire blazed among the picturesque groups of Mexicans playing monte around it.

On the third afternoon, the Señora and Isabel were taking a siesta, but Antonia could not sleep. After one or two efforts she was thoroughly aroused by the sound of voices which had been very familiar to her in the black days of the flight—those of a woman and her weary family of seven children. She had helped her in many ways, and she still felt

an interest in her welfare. It appeared now to be assured. Antonia found her camping in a little grove of mulberry trees. She had recovered her health; her children were noisy and happy, and her husband, a tall, athletic man, with a determined eye and very courteous manners, was unharnessing the mules from a fine Mexican wagon; part of the lawful spoils of war. They, too, were going home: "back to the Brazos," said the woman affectionately; "and we're in a considerable hurry," she added, "because it's about time to get the corn in. Jake lays out to plant fifty acres this year. He says he can go to planting now with an easy conscience; he 'lows he has killed enough Mexicans to keep him quiet a spell."

They talked a short time together, and then Antonia walked slowly into the deeper shadows of the wood. She found a wide rock, under trees softly dimpling, pendulous, and tenderly green; and she sat down in the sweet gloom, to think of the beloved dead. She had often longed for some quiet spot, where, alone with God and nature, she could, just for once, give to her sorrow and her love a free expression.

Now the opportunity seemed to be hers. She began to recall her whole acquaintance with Dare—their hours of pleasant study—their sails upon the river—their intercourse by the fireside—the most happy Sundays, when they walked in the house of God together. In those days, what a blessed future was before them! She recalled also the time of hope and anxiety after the storming of the Alamo, and then the last heroic act of his stainless life. She had felt sure that in such a session with her own soul she would find the relief of unrestrained and unchecked weeping. But we cannot kindle when we will either the fire or the sensibility of the soul. She could not weep; tears were far from her. Nay, more, she began to feel as if tears were not needed for one who had found out so beautiful, so unselfish, so divine a road to the grave. Ought she not rather to rejoice that he had been so early called and blest? To be glad for herself, too, that all her life long she could keep the exquisite memory of a love so noble?

In the drift of such thoughts, her white, handsome face grew almost angelic. She sat motionless and let them come to her; as if she

were listening to the comforting angels. For God has many ways of saying to the troubled soul: "Be at peace"; and, certainly, Antonia had not anticipated the calmness and resignation which forbid her the tears she had bespoken.

At length, in that sweet melancholy which such a mental condition induces, she rose to return to the camp. A few yards nearer to it she saw Lopez sitting in a reverie as profound as her own had been. He stood up to meet her. The patience, the pathos, the exaltation in her face touched his heart as no words could have done. He said, only: "Señorita, if I knew how to comfort you!"

"I went away to think of the dead, Señor."

"I comprehend—but then, I wonder if the dead remember the living!"

"In whatever dwelling-place of eternity the dear ones who died at Goliad are, I am sure that they remember. Will the emancipated soul be less faithful than the souls still earth-bound? Good souls could not even wish to forget—and they were good."

"It will never be permitted me to know two souls more pure, more faithful, more brave.

Juan was as a brother to me, and, *by my Santiguada!* * I count it among God's blessings to have known a man like Señor Grant. A white soul he had indeed; full of great nobilities!"

Antonia looked at him gratefully. Tears uncalled-for sprang into the eyes of both; they clasped hands and walked mutely back to the camp together. For the sentiment which attends the realization that all is over, is gathered silently into the heart; it is too deep for words.

They found the camp already in that flurry of excitement always attendant upon its rest and rising, and the Señora was impatiently inquiring for her eldest daughter.

"*Gracious Maria!* Is that you, Antonia? At this hour we are all your servants, I think. I, at least, have been waiting upon your pleasure"; then perceiving the traces of sorrow and emotion on her face, she added, with an unreasonable querulousness: "I bless God when I see how He has provided for women; giving them tears, when they have no other employment for their time."

* Sign of the Cross.

"Dearest mother, I am sorry to have kept you waiting. I hope that you have forgotten nothing. Where is your mantilla? And have you replenished your cigarito case? Is there water in the wagon?"

"Nothing has been provided. Things most necessary are forgotten, no doubt. When you neglect such matters, what less could happen?"

But such little breezes of temper were soon over. The influences surrounding, the prospects in advance, were too exhilarating to permit of anything but passing shadows, and after an easy, delightful journey, they reached at length the charming vicinity of the romantic city of the sword. They had but another five miles ride, and it was the Señora's pleasure to take it at the hour of midnight. She did not wish her return to be observed and talked about; she was in reality very much mortified by the condition of her own and her daughters' wardrobe.

Consequently, though they made their noon camp so near to their journey's end, they rested there until San Antonio was asleep and dreaming. It was the happiest rest of all the delightful ones they had known. The knowledge

that it was the last stage of a journey so remarkable, made every one attach a certain tender value to the hours never to come back; to the experiences never to be repeated.

The Señora was gay as a child; Isabel shared and accentuated her enthusiasms; Luis was expressing his happiness in a variety of songs; now glorifying his love in some pretty romance or serenade, again musically assuring liberty, or Texas, that he would be delighted at any moment to lay down his life for their sakes. Antonia was quite as much excited in her own way, which was naturally a much quieter way; and Lopez sat under a great pecan-tree, smoking his cigarito with placid smiles and admiring glances at every one.

As the sun set, the full moon rose as it rises nowhere but over Texan or Asian plains; golden, glorious, seeming to fill the whole heaven and the whole earth with an unspeakable radiance; softly glowing, exquisitely, magically beautifying. The commonest thing under it was transfigured into something lovely, fantastic, fairy-like. And the dullest souls swelled and rose like the tides under its influence.

Antonia took from their stores the best they

had, and a luxurious supper was spread upon the grass. The meal might have been one of ten courses, it occupied so long; it provoked so much mirth, such a rippling stream of reminiscence; finally, such a sweetly solemn retrospect of the sorrows and mercies and triumphs of the campaign they had shared together. This latter feeling soon dominated all others.

The delicious light, the sensuous atmosphere, the white turrets and towers of the city, shining on the horizon like some mystical, heavenly city in dreams—the murmur of its far-off life, more audible to the spiritual than the natural ears—the dark figures of the camp servants, lying in groups or quietly shuffling their cards, were all elements conducive to a grave yet happy seriousness.

No one intended to sleep. They were to rest in the moonlight until the hour of eleven, and then make their last stage. This night they instinctively kept close together. The Señora had mentally reached that point where it was not unpleasant to talk over troubles, and to amplify especially her own share of them.

"But, Holy Maria!" she said; "how unnec-

essary are such sorrows! I am never, in the least, any better for them. When the Divine Majesty condescends to give me the sunshine of prosperity, I am always exceedingly religious. On the contrary, when I am in sorrow, I do not feel inclined to pray. That is precisely natural. Can the blessed Mother expect thanks, when she gives her children only suffering and tears?"

"God gives us whatever is best for us, dear mother."

"Speak, when you have learned wisdom, Antonia. I shall always believe that trouble comes from the devil; indeed, Fray Ignatius once told me of a holy man that had one grief upon the heels of the other, and it was the devil who was sent with all of them. I have myself no doubt that he opened the gates of hell for Santa Anna to return to earth and do a little work for him."

"This thought makes me tremble," said Lopez; "souls that have become angelic, can become evil. The degraded seraphim, whom we call the devil, was once the companion of archangels, and stood with Michael, and Raphael, and Gabriel, in the presence of the Holy

One. Is there sin in heaven? Can we be tempted even there?"

The inquiry went in different ways to each heart, but no one answered it. There were even a few moments of constrained, conscious silence, which Luis happily ended, by chanting softly a verse from the hymn of the Three Angels:

"'*Who like the Lord?*' thunders Michael the Chief.
Raphael, '*the cure of God,*' bringeth relief,
And, as at Nazareth, prophet of peace,
Gabriel, '*the light of God,*' bringeth release."

The noble syllables floated outward and upward, and Antonia and Lopez softly intoned the last line together, letting them fall slowly and softly into the sensitive atmosphere.

"And as for trouble coming from the devil," said Lopez, "I think, Señora, that Fray Ignatius is wrong. Trouble is not the worst thing that can come to a man or woman. On the contrary, our Lady of Prosperity is said to do them far greater harm. Let me repeat to you what the ever wise Don Francisco de Quevedo Villegas says about her:

"Where is the virtue prosperity has not staggered? Where the folly she has not aug-

mented? She takes no counsel, she fears no punishment. She furnishes matter for scandal, experience, and for story. How many souls, innocent while poor, have fallen into sin and impiety as soon as they drank of the enchanted cup of prosperity? Men that can bear prosperity, are for heaven; even wise devils leave them alone. As for the one who persecuted and beggared Job, how foolish and impertinent he was! If he had understood humanity, he would have multiplied his riches, and possessed him of health, and honors, and pleasures: *that* is the trial it cannot bear.'"

"Oh, to be sure! Quevedo was a wise man. But even wise men don't know everything. However, *we are going home!* I thank the saints for this immeasurable favor. It is a prosperity that is good for women. I will stake my Santiguida on that! And will you observe that it is Sunday again? Just before sunset I heard the vesper bells clearly. Remember that we left San Antonio on Sunday also! I have always heard that Sunday was a good day to begin a journey on."

"If it had been on a Friday—"

"Friday! Indeed, Luis, I would not have

gone one hundred yards upon a Friday. How can you suppose what is so inconceivably foolish?"

"I think much of the right hour to undertake anything," said Lopez. "The first movements are not in the hands of men; and we are subject to more influences than we comprehend. There is a ripe time for events, as well as for fruits: but the hour depends upon forces which we cannot control by giving to them the name of the day; and our sage Quevedo has made a pleasant mockery thereon. It is at my lips, if your ears care to hear it."

"Quevedo, again! No, it is not proper, Señor. Every day has its duties and its favors, Señor. That man actually said that fasting on Friday was not a special means of grace! Quevedo was almost a heretic. I have heard Fray Ignatius say so. He did not approve of him."

"Mi madre, let us hear what is to be said. Rachela told me, I must fast on a Friday, and cut my nails on a Wednesday, and never cut them on a Sunday, and take medicine on a Monday, and look after money on Tuesday, and pay calls and give gifts on Saturday; very well, I do not think much of Rachela;

just suppose, for the passing of the time, that we listen to what Quevedo says."

"Here are four against me; well, then, proceed, Señor."

"'On Monday,' says the wise and witty one, 'buy all that you can meet with, and take all that is to be had for nothing. On Tuesday, receive all that is given you; for it is Mar's day, and he will look on you with an ill aspect if you refuse the first proffer and have not a second. On Wednesday, ask of all you meet; perhaps Mercury may give some one vanity enough to grant you something. Thursday is a good day to believe nothing that flatterers say. Friday it is well to shun creditors. On Saturday it is well to lie long abed, to walk at your ease, to eat a good dinner, and to wear comfortable shoes; because Saturn is old, and loves his ease.'"

"And Sunday, Señor?"

"Pardon, Señorita Isabel, Sunday comes not into a pasquinade. Senora, let me tell you that it draws near to eleven. If we leave now we shall reach San Antonio in time to say the prayer of gratitude before the blessed day of the seven is past."

"Holy Mary! that is what I should desire. Come, my children; I thank you, Señor, for such a blessed memory. My heart is indeed full of joy and thankfulness."

A slight disappointment, however, awaited the Señora. Without asking any questions, without taking anything into consideration, perhaps, indeed, because she feared to ask or consider, she had assumed that she would immediately re-enter her own home. With the unreason of a child, she had insisted upon expecting that somehow, or by some not explained efforts, she would find her house precisely as she left it. Little had been said of its occupancy by Fray Ignatius and his brothers; perhaps she did not quite believe in the statement; perhaps she expected Fray Ignatius to respect the arrangements which he knew had been so dear to her.

It was therefore a trial—indeed, something of a shock—when she found they were to be the guests of Navarro, and when it was made clear to her that her own home had been dismantled and rearranged and was still in the possession of the Church. But, with a child's unreason, she had also a sweet ductility of

nature; she was easily persuaded, easily pleased, and quite ready to console herself with the assurance that it only needed Doctor Worth's presence and personal influence to drive away all intruders upon her rights.

In the mean time she was contented. The finest goods in San Antonio were sent early on the following morning to her room; and the selection of three entire wardrobes gave her abundance of delightful employment. She almost wept with joy as she passed the fine lawns and rich silks through her worn fingers. And when she could cast off forever her garment of heaviness and of weariful wanderings, and array herself in the splendid robes which she wore with such grace and pleasure, she was an honestly grateful woman.

Then she permitted Lopez to let her old acquaintances know of her presence in her native city; and she was comforted when she began to receive calls from the Señora Alveda, and Judge and Señora Valdez, and many other of her friends and associates. They encouraged her to talk of her sufferings and her great loss. Even the judge thought it worth his while, now, to conciliate the simple

little woman. He had wisdom enough to perceive that Mexican domination was over, and that the American influence of Doctor Worth was likely to be of service to him.

The Señora found herself a heroine; more than that, she became aware that for some reason those who had once patronized her were now disposed to pay her a kind of court. But this did not lessen her satisfaction; she suspected no motive but real kindness, for she had that innate rectitude which has always confidence in the honesty of others.

There was now full reconciliation between Luis and his mother and uncles; and his betrothal to Isabel was acknowledged with all the customary rejoicings and complimentary calls and receptions. Life quickly began to fall back into its well-defined grooves; if there was anything unusual, every one made an effort to pass it by without notice. The city was conspicuously in this mind. American rule was accepted in the quiescent temper with which men and women accept weather which may or may not be agreeable, but which is known to be unavoidable. Americans were coming by hundreds and by thousands;

and those Mexicans who could not make up their minds to become Texans, and to assimilate with the new elements sure to predominate, were quietly breaking up their homes and transferring their interests across the Rio Grande.

They were not missed, even for a day. Some American was ready to step into their place, and the pushing, progressive spirit of the race was soon evident in the hearty way with which they set to work, not only to repair what war had destroyed, but to inaugurate those movements which are always among their first necessities. Ministers, physicians, teachers, mechanics of all kinds, were soon at work; churches were built, Bibles were publicly sold, or given away; schools were advertised; the city was changing its tone as easily as a woman changes the fashion of her dress. Santa Anna had said truly enough to Houston, that the Texans had no flag to fight under; but the young Republic very soon flung her ensign out among those of the gray nations of the world. It floated above the twice glorious Alamo: a bright blue standard, with one white star in the centre. It was

run up at sunrise one morning. The city was watching for it; and when it suddenly flew out in their sight, it was greeted with the most triumphant enthusiasm. The lonely star in its field of blue touched every heart's chivalry. It said to them, "I stand alone! I have no sister states to encourage and help me! I rely only on the brave hearts and strong arms that set me here!" And they answered the silent appeal with a cheer that promised everything; with a love that even then began to wonder if there were not a place for such a glorious star in the grand constellation under which most of them had been born.

A short time after their return, the Señora had a letter from her husband, saying that he was going to New Orleans with General Houston, whose wound was in a dangerous condition. Thomas Worth had been appointed to an important post in the civil government; and his labors, like those of all the public men of Texas at that date, were continuous and Herculean. It was impossible for him to leave them; but the doctor assured his wife that he would return as soon as he had placed Houston in the hands of skilful surgeons; and he asked

her, until then, to be as happy as her circumstances permitted.

She was quite willing to obey the request. Not naturally inclined to worry, she found many sources of content and pleasure, until the early days of June brought back to her the husband she so truly loved, and with him the promise of a return to her own home. Indeed the difficulties in the way of this return had vanished ere they were to meet. Fray Ignatius had convinced himself that his short lease had fully expired; and when Dr. Worth went armed with the legal process necessary to resume his rights, he found his enemy had already surrendered them. The house was empty. Nothing of its old splendor remained. Every one of its properties had been scattered. The poor Señora walked through the desolate rooms with a heartache.

"It was precisely in this spot that the sideboard stood, Roberto!—the sideboard that my cousin Johar presented to me. It came from the City of Mexico, and there was not another like it. I shall regret it all my life."

"Maria, my dearest, it might have been worse. The silver which adorned it is safe.

Those r—monks did not find out its hiding-place, and I bought you a far more beautiful sideboard in New Orleans; the very newest style, Maria."

"Roberto! Roberto! How happy you make me! To be sure my cousin Johar's sideboard was already shabby—and to have a sideboard from New Orleans, that, indeed, is something to talk about!"

"Besides, which, dearest one, I bought new furniture for the parlors, and for your own apartments; also for Antonia's and Isabel's rooms. Indeed, Maria, I thought it best to provide afresh for the whole house."

"How wonderful! No wife in San Antonio has a husband so good. I will never condescend to speak of you when other women talk of their husbands. New furniture for my whole house! The thing is inconceivably charming. But when, Roberto, will these things arrive? Is there danger on the road they are coming? Might not some one take them away? I shall not be able to sleep until I am sure they are safe."

"I chartered a schooner in New Orleans, and came with them to the Bay of Espiritu Santo.

There I saw them placed upon wagons, and only left them after the customs had been paid in the interior—sixty miles away. You may hire servants at once to prepare the rooms: the furniture will be here in about three days."

"I am the happiest woman in the world, Roberto!" And she really felt herself to be so. Thoughtful love could have devised nothing more likely to bridge pleasantly and surely over the transition between the past and the coming life. Every fresh piece of furniture unpacked was a new wonder and a new delight. With her satin skirts tucked daintily clear of soil, and her mantilla wrapped around her head and shoulders, she went from room to room, interesting herself in every strip of carpet, and every yard of drapery. Her delight was infectious. The doctor smiled to find himself comparing shades, and gravely considering the arrangement of chairs and tables.

But how was it possible for so loving a husband and father to avoid sharing the pleasure he had provided? And Isabel was even more excited than her mother. All this grandeur had a double meaning to her; it would reflect

honor upon the betrothal receptions which would be given for Luis and herself—"amber satin and white lace is exactly what I should have desired, Antonia," she said delightedly. "How exceedingly suitable it will be to me! And those delicious chintzes and dimities for our bedrooms! Did you ever conceive of things so beautiful?"

Antonia was quite ready to echo her delight. Housekeeping and homemaking, in all its ways, was her lovable talent. It was really Antonia who saw all the plans and the desires of the Señora thoroughly carried out. It was her clever fingers and natural taste which gave to every room that air of comfort and refinement which all felt and admired, but which seemed to elude their power to imitate.

On the fourth of July the doctor and his family ate together their first dinner in their renovated home. The day was one that he never forgot, and he was glad to link it with a domestic occurence so happy and so fortunate.

Sometimes silently, sometimes with a few words to his boys, he had always, on this festival, drank his glass of fine Xeres to the honor and glory of the land he loved. This

day he spoke her name proudly. He recalled the wonders of her past progress; he anticipated the blessings which she would bring to Texas; he said, as he lifted the glass in his hand, and let the happy tears flow down his browned and thinned face:

"My wife and daughters, I believe I shall live to see the lone star set in the glorious assemblage of her sister stars! I shall live to say, I dwell in San Antonio, which is the loveliest city in the loveliest State of the American Union. For, dear ones, I was born an American citizen, and I ask this favor of God, that I may also die an American citizen."

"*Mi Roberto*, when you die I shall not long survive you. And now that the house is made so beautiful! With so much new furniture! How can you speak of dying?"

"And, my dear father, remember how you have toiled and suffered for *the Independence of Texas.*"

"Because, Antonia, I would have Texas go free into a union of free States. This was the hope of Houston. 'We can have help,' he often said to his little army; "a word will call

help from Nacogdoches,—but we will emancipate ourselves. If we go into the American States, we will go as equals; we will go as men who have won the right to say: *Let us dwell under the same flag, for we are brothers!*"

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### UNDER ONE FLAG.

"And through thee I believe
In the noble and great, who are gone.

"Yes! I believe that there lived
Others like thee in the past.
Not like the men of the crowd.
Who all around me to-day,
Bluster, or cringe, and make life
Hideous, and arid, and vile,
But souls temper'd with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good;
Helpers, and friends of mankind."

—ARNOLD.

"Our armor now may rust, our idle scimitars
Hang by our sides for ornament, not use.
Children shall beat our atabals and drums;
And all the noisy trades of war no more
Shall wake the peaceful morn."

—DRYDEN.

AS the years go on they bring many changes—changes that come as naturally as the seasons—that tend as naturally to anticipated growth and decay—that scarcely startle the subjects of them, till a lengthened

out period of time discloses their vitality and extent. Between the ages of twenty and thirty, ten years do not seem very destructive to life. The woman at eighteen, and twenty-eight, if changed, is usually ripened and improved; the man at thirty, finer and more mature than he was at twenty. But when this same period is placed to women and men who are either approaching fifty, or have passed it, the change is distinctly felt.

It was even confessed by the Señora one exquisite morning in the beginning of March, though the sun was shining warmly, and the flowers blooming, and the birds singing, and all nature rejoicing, as though it was the first season of creation.

"I am far from being as gay and strong as I wish to be, Roberto," she said; "and to-day, consider what a company there is coming! And if General Houston is to be added to it, I shall be as weary as I shall be happy."

"He is the simplest of men; a cup of coffee, a bit of steak—"

"*San Blas!* That is how you talk! But is it possible to receive him like a common mortal? He is a hero, and, besides that,

among *hidalgos de casa Solar*" (gentlemen of known property)—

"Well, then, you have servants, Maria, my dear one."

"Servants! Bah! Of what use are they, Roberto, since they also have got hold of American ideas?"

"Isabel and Antonia will be here."

"Let me only enumerate to you, Roberto. Thomas and his wife and four children arrived last night. You may at this moment hear the little Maria crying. I dare say Pepita is washing the child, and using soap which is very disagreeable. I have always admired the wife of Thomas, but I think she is too fond of her own way with the children. I give her advices which she does not take."

"They are her own children, dearest."

"Holy Maria! They are also my own grandchildren."

"Well, well, we must remember that Abbie is a little Puritan. She believes in bringing up children strictly, and it is good; for Thomas would spoil them. As for Isabel's boys—"

"God be blessed! Isabel's boys are entirely charming. They have been corrected at

my own knee. There are not more beautifully behaved boys in the christened world."

"And Antonia's little Christina?"

"She is already an angel. Ah, Roberto! If I had only died when I was as innocent as that dear one!"

"I am thankful you did not die, Maria. How dark my life would have been without you!"

"Beloved, then I am glad I am not in the kingdom of heaven; though, if one dies like Christina, one escapes purgatory. Roberto, when I rise I am very stiff: I think, indeed, I have some rheumatism."

"That is not unlikely; and also Maria, you have now some years."

"Let that be confessed; but the good God knows that I lost all my youth in that awful flight of 'thirty-six."

"Maria, we all left or lost something on that dark journey. To-day, we shall recover its full value."

"To be sure—that is what is said—we shall see. Will you now send Dolores to me? I must arrange my toilet with some haste; and tell me, Roberto, what dress is your prefer-

ence; it is your eyes, beloved, I wish to please."

Robert Worth was not too old to feel charmed and touched by the compliment. And he was not a thoughtless or churlish husband; he knew how to repay such a wifely compliment, and it was a pleasant sight to see the aged companions standing hand in hand before the handsome suits which Dolores had spread out for her mistress to examine.

He looked at the purple and the black and the white robes, and then he looked at the face beside him. It was faded, and had lost its oval shape; but its coloring was yet beautiful, and the large, dark eyes tender and bright below the snow-white hair. After a few minutes' consideration, he touched, gently, a robe of white satin. "Put this on, Maria," he said, "and your white mantilla, and your best jewels. The occasion will excuse the utmost splendor."

The choice delighted her. She had really wished to wear it, and some one's judgment to endorse her own inclinations was all that was necessary to confirm her wish. Dolores found her in the most delightful temper. She sat

before the glass, smiling and talking, while her maid piled high the snowy plaits and curls, and crowned them with the jewelled comb, only worn on very great festivals. Her form was still good, and the white satin fell gracefully from her throat to her small feet. Besides, whatever of loss or gain had marred her once fine proportions, was entirely concealed by the beautifying, graceful, veiling folds of her mantilla. There was the flash of diamonds, and the moonlight glimmer of pearls beneath this flimsy covering; and at her belt a few white lilies. She was exceedingly pleased with her own appearance, and her satisfaction gave an ease and a sense of authority to her air and movements which was charming.

"By Maria's grace, I am a very pretty old lady," she said to herself; "and I think I shall astonish my daughter-in-law a little. One is afraid of these calm, cool, northern women, but I feel to-day that even Abbie must be proud of me."

Indeed, her entrance into the large parlor made quite a sensation. She could see the quiet pleasure in her husband's face; and her son Thomas, after one glance, put down the

child on his knee, and went to meet her. "Mi madre," he whispered with a kiss. He had not used the pretty Spanish word for years, but in the sudden rush of admiring tenderness, his boyish heart came back to him, and quite unconsciously he used his boyhood's speech. After this, she was not the least in awe of her wise daughter-in-law. She touched her cheek kindly, and asked her about the children, and was immeasurably delighted when Abbie said: "How beautiful you are to-day! I wish I had your likeness to send to Boston. Robert, come here and look at your grandmother! I want you to remember, as long as you live, how grandmother looks to-day." And Robert —a fine lad eight years old, accustomed to implicit obedience—put down the book he was reading, planted himself squarely before the Señora, and looked at her attentively, as if she was a lesson to be learned.

"Well then, Roberto?"

"I am glad I have such a pretty grandmother. Will you let me stand on tiptoes and kiss you?" and the cool, calm northern woman's eyes filled with tears, as she brought her younger children, one by one, for the Señora's

caress. The doctor and his son watched this pretty domestic drama with hearts full of pride and happiness; and before it had lost one particle of its beauty and feeling, the door was flung open with a vigor which made every one turn to it with expectation. A splendid little lad sprang in, and without any consideration for satin and lace, clung to the Señora. He was her image: a true Yturbide, young as he was; beautiful and haughty as his Castilian ancestors.

Isabel and Luis followed; Isabel more lovely than ever, richly dressed in American fashion, full of pretty enthusiasms, vivacious, charming, and quite at her ease. She had been married eight years. She was a fashionable woman, and an authority upon all social subjects.

Luis also was wonderfully improved. The light-hearted gaiety, which ten years ago had bubbled over in continual song, was still there; but it was under control, evident only because it made perpetual sunshine on his face. He had taken the doctor's advice—completed his study of English and Mexican law—and become a famous referee in cases of disputed Mexican

claims and title deeds. His elegant form and handsome, olive face looked less picturesque in the dull, uncompromising stiffness of broadcloth, cut into those peculiarly unbecoming fashions of ugliness which the anglo-Saxon and anglo-American affect. But it gained by the change a certain air of reliability and importance; an air not to be dispensed with in a young lawyer already aspiring to the seat among the lawmakers of his State.

"We called upon Antonia," said Isabel, "as we came here. Of course she was engaged with Lopez. They were reading a book together; and even on such a day as this were taking, with the most blessed indifference, a minute at a time. They will join us on the Plaza. I represented to them that they might miss a good position. 'That has been already secured,' said Lopez, with that exasperating repose which only the saints could endure with patience. For that reason, I consider Antonia a saint to permit it. As for me, I should say: 'The house is on fire, Lopez! Will it please you for once to feel a little excited?' Luis says they read, continually, books which make people think of great solemnities and responsibilities.

How foolish, when they are so rich, and might enjoy themselves perpetually!"

"Here are the carriages," cried Thomas Worth, "and the ceremony of to-day has its own hour. It will never come again."

"Your mother and I will go first, Thomas; and we will take Abbie and your eldest son. I shall see you in your place. Luis, bring your boy with you; he has intelligence and will remember the man he will see to-day, and may never see again."

On the Plaza, close to the gates of the Alamo, a rostrum had been erected; and around it were a few stands, set apart for the carriages of the most illustrious of the families of San Antonio. The Señora, from the shaded depths of her own, watched their arrival. Nothing could be more characteristic than the approach of her daughters. Antonia and Lopez, stately and handsome, came slowly; their high-stepping horses chafing at their restraint. Luis and Isabel drove to their appointed place with a speed and clatter, accentuated by the jingling of the silver rings of the harness and the silver hanging buttons on the gay dress of the Mexican driver. But the occupants of both car-

riages appeared to be great favorites with the populace who thronged the Plaza, the windows, the flat roofs of the houses, and every available place for hearing and seeing.

The blue flag of Texas fluttered gayly over the lovely city; and there was a salvo of cannon; then, into the sunshine and into the sight of all stepped the man of his generation. Nature has her royal line, and she makes no mistakes in the kings she crowns. The physical charm of Houston was at this time very great. His tall, ample, dignified form attracted attention at once. His eyes penetrated the souls of all upon whom they fell. His lips were touched with fire, and his words thrilled and swayed men, as the wind sways the heavy heads in a field of ripe barley.

He stretched out his arms to the people, and they stretched out their arms to him. The magnetic chain of sympathy was complete. The hearts of his listeners were an instrument, on which he played the noblest, most inspiring, the sweetest of melodies. He kindled them as flame kindles dry grass. He showed them their future with a prophet's eye, and touched them also with the glad diviner's rap-

ture. They aspired, they rejoiced at his bidding; and at the moment of their highest enthusiasm, he cried out:

"Whatever State gave us birth, we have one native land and we have one flag!" Instantly from the grim, blood-stained walls of the fortress, the blessed Stars and Stripes flew out; and in a moment a thousand smaller flags, from every high place, gave it salutation. Then the thunder of cannon was answered by the thunder of voices. Cannon may thunder and make no impression; but the shout of humanity! It stirs and troubles the deepest heart-stream. It is a cry that cannot be resisted. It sets the gates of feeling wide open. And it was while men were in this mood that Houston said his last words:

"I look in this glorious sunshine upon the bloody walls of the Alamo. I remember Goliad. I carry my memory back over the long struggle of thirty years. Do you think the young, brave souls, fired with the love of liberty, who fell in this long conflict have forgotten it? No! No! No! Wherever in God's Eternity they are this day, I believe they are permitted to know that Texas has become part of their

country, and rests forever under the flag they loved. The shouting thousands, the booming cannon, that greeted this flag were not all the sounds I heard! Far off, far off, yet louder than any noise of earth, I heard from the dead years, and the dead heroes of these years; the hurrahing of ghostly voices and the clapping of unseen hands!"

"It was like Houston to call the dead to the triumph," said the doctor, as he stood with the Señora in her room. He was unbuttoning her gloves, and her tears dropped down upon his hands.

"He is a man by himself, and none like him. I thought that I should never forgive him for sparing the life of that monster—Santa Anna; but to-day I forgive him even that. I am so happy that I shall ask Holy Maria to excuse me the feeling; for it is not good to permit one's self to be too happy; it brings trouble. But indeed, when I looked at Thomas, I thought how wisely he has married. It is seldom a mother can approve of her daughter-in-law; but Abbie has many excellencies—good manners, and a good heart, and a fortune which is quite respectable."

"And strong principles also, Maria. She will bring up her children to know right and wrong, and to do right."

"*That* of course. Every good mother does that. I am sure it is a sight for the angels to see Isabel teaching her children their prayers. Did you observe also how great a favorite Luis is? He lifted his hat to this one and that one, and it is certain that the next election will be in his hand."

"Perhaps—I wish Lopez would take more interest in politics. He is a dreamer."

"But, then, a very happy dreamer." Perhaps to dream well and pleasantly is to live a better life. Antonia is devoted to him. She has a blessed lot. Once I did not think she would be so fortunate."

"Lopez was prudent and patient."

"Prudent! Patient! It is a miracle to me! I assure you, they even talk together of young Señor Grant! It is satisfactory, but extremely strange."

"You had better sleep a little, Maria. General Houston is coming to dinner."

"That is understood. When I spoke last to him, I was a woman broken-hearted. To-night

I will thank him for all that he has done. Ah, Roberto! His words to-day went to my soul —I thought of my Juan—I thought of the vision he showed me—I wondered if he knew—if he saw—and heard—" she leaned her head upon her husband's breast, and he kissed away the sorrowful rain.

"He was so sweet! so beautiful! Oh, Roberto!"

"He was God's greatest gift to us. Maria! dear Maria! I love you for all the children you have given me; *but most of all, for Juan!*"

THE END.

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